

# THE HIMALAYA BORDERLAND

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

*The Government and Politics of Tibet,*  
Vikas Publications, Delhi, 1969

# THE HIMALAYA BORDERLAND

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RAM RAHUL

HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES,  
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## PREFACE

*The Himalaya Borderland* is the first book to study in its totality the southern half of the Himalaya borderland, comprising the North-East Frontier Area (NEFA), Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Uttarakhand (Uttar Pradesh), Kinnaur, Lahul and Spiti (Himachal Pradesh), and Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir). Tibet, which constitutes the northern half of the Himalaya borderland, is beyond the framework of this study and I have dealt with it in detail in the companion volume, *The Government and Politics of Tibet*. This is entirely a general study, and hence I have deliberately dispensed with all such trappings as footnotes and references. I hope it will create the necessary awareness of the social, economic, and political situation in the Himalaya.

I have concluded this study with a few observations, but I have not advanced or refuted any geographical, anthropological, or historical theories. I have presented my facts in as simple and straightforward a manner as possible. The reader may consider them for what they are worth and form his own judgement.

The bibliography lists only select works of relevance to this study. The material collected from the literature on the Himalaya, which is enormous, has been supplemented by my own findings gathered as a result of my extensive geographical, anthropological, and historical researches in the entire Himalaya, culminating in my participation in the Mount Everest expedition in the spring of 1952.

I have used the collective name *Himalaya* (Him, snow, plus alaya, home) in place of the commonly used *Himalayas*, which is a double plural and a grammatical monstrosity. Indeed, to use the word *Himalayas* is as absurd as referring to

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Englishmen as the Englishes or using the word alphabets for two or more letters and characters of an alphabet. Moreover, Himalayas jars on ears accustomed to the euphony of Sanskrit words and phrases. It is curious that it is only in English that the name suffers a corruption. In all the other languages of the world, including other Western languages like French and Russian, it is what we in India have called it from time immemorial.

Two more spellings that I have used may also call for an explanation. They are *Kumaun* and *Lahul*. I have preferred them because phonetically they are more approximate to the names they represent than the usual *Kumaon* and *Lahaul*, and much less misleading.

Much has gone into the making of this book. I wish to thank the officials of the Government of India who have been or are in the Himalaya. Several of my friends in the Himalaya border countries have given me valuable advice and assistance in my work there. I am especially beholden to F.C. Badhwar of the Himalayan Club (New Delhi) and Ranjit Rai of Rai & Sons (New Delhi) for their generous help in my programme of exploration and mountaineering in the Himalaya. Of course, for the blemishes as well as the point of view in the book, only I am responsible.

RAM RAHUL



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## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

THE HIMALAYA, especially the central ridge of that mountain system which marks the southern limit of Tibet, stands astride the landmass of Asia for 2,500 miles from Assam in the east to Jammu and Kashmir in the west, including the kingdoms of Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal. With its magnificent skyward sweep, peak rising above peak for over a hundred miles from the foothills in the south to the crest line in the north, it is easily the most dominating land feature of the world. It is inextricably woven with the life and legends of India. According to Hindu tradition, it is the "throne" of the gods. Kalidasa, the great Sanskrit poet, calls it *devatātma* or the divine-souled. The sages and thinkers of India have always derived their inspiration and spiritual strength from the Himalaya. The Buddhists, the Hindus, and the Jains have always looked upon the Himalaya with the greatest awe and veneration and have established there such sacred shrines and places of pilgrimage as Brahmakund in Assam, Pashupatinath in Nepal, and Amarnath in Kashmir. The holy Kailash and Manasarovar have been familiar to all the people of India from time immemorial. There were great cultures and kingdoms flourishing in ancient Assam, Nepal, and Kashmir when man in other parts of the world was yet to learn the rudiments of civilization. The Himalaya thus has been an abiding factor in the culture and heritage of India.

The Himalaya is the source of India's great rivers like

the Brahmaputra, the Ganga, and the Indus, which, apart from being intimately associated with the country's fascinating myths and mythology, vitally affect the life and economy of the people of its northern plains. It has lent the country the prominent features of its climate and seasons. It has, further, stood as a bulwark of our security. Its formidable, impassable central ridge has always protected us from invasions from the north. It has preserved our social life undisturbed and exerted an integrating influence on the social structure in India. It has also always served as the geographical, ethnological, and political divide between India on the one hand and Central Asia and China on the other. Of course, while the rugged character of the terrain checked the mass movement of people, the mountain passes and valleys always allowed slow penetration for purposes of pilgrimage and trade. During the heyday of Buddhism, monks from Assam, Nepal, and Kashmir crossed over the Himalaya to spread Buddhism in Central Asia, China, and Tibet.

The North-East Frontier Area (NEFA) from Burma in the east to Bhutan in the west, a vast territory of mountains and valleys between the plain of the Brahmaputra and the watershed of the Assam Himalaya, may well be called the great north-eastern marches of India. The land route from India to south-western China passes through here. Before the Chinese control of Tibet in the summer of 1951, there always was a flourishing trade between South-eastern Tibet and India over the Rima-Sadiya trail. Bhutan, which lies along the northern boundary of Assam and Bengal, occupies a most important part of the glacis of the Eastern Himalaya. Sikkim is a unique wedge between Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet. Nepal is the biggest and most important State in the Himalaya. Unlike the other Native States of India, it never became a part of the British Empire in India. The Anglo-Nepalese Treaty of 21 December 1923 designated Nepal a sovereign State with very special relations with the British. The British had no formal commitment to defend Nepal against external aggression, but they main-

tained an unobtrusive tutelage over Nepal. Close bonds of geography and history have always drawn India and Nepal towards each other. Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir, marked off by Nepal in the east and by Afghanistan in the west, a vast territory of mountains and valleys between the plains of Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab and the watershed of the Punjab Himalaya, may be described as constituting the great north-western marches of India. Ladakh borders China and the Pamir confines of Russia. The land route from India to Central Asia passes through here. Before the Chinese control of Sinkiang in the spring of 1950, there always was a flourishing trade between Central Asia and India over the Karakoram Pass.

All through history the Himalaya borderland held an irresistible fascination for men of adventure, explorers, missionaries, and administrators on account of its fantastic geographical, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Though the Asians, especially the Chinese and the Indians, had always taken an interest in the Himalaya, the British were the first to realize the vital role of the Himalaya in the politics of Central Asia. They used all their tact and diplomacy to wean the Himalaya border countries away from Central Asian influence either by annexing them or by extending their protection to them. It is only after they left the scene in the summer of 1947 and the Chinese occupied Tibet in the spring of 1951 that these countries became susceptible to territorial, political, and ideological encroachments from the north.

In India there was not much awareness and understanding of the importance of the Himalaya borderland. There was very little curiosity about its astonishing geographical and ethnic peculiarities. There was no serious study of its economic, political, and social situation either. It is only certain recent developments in Central Asia, especially the Chinese invasion of India in the winter of 1962 and the continuing Sino-Indian confrontation on the border, that have brought the Himalaya borderland into focus and have made it a subject of great interest.

The entire Himalaya borderland, including Bhutan, Sikkim,

and Nepal, has been the scene of an unprecedented advance in the fields of administration and socio economic development since India achieved independence and Tibet came under the control of China. The Government of India has given up the old policy of leaving the Himalaya border countries unadministered and undeveloped—and, therefore, isolated—in favour of a programme of modernization which would bring about the advancement of the people without impairing their individuality.

Studies on the Himalaya have received considerable impetus in the country in the post-1947 period owing to important political, social, and economic changes in India and the neighbouring countries. In India in particular, because of the threat to its security from across the Himalaya, they have acquired an importance and an urgency never felt before. It is not only the universities and research institutions that are engaged in the task of opening up the Himalaya and enabling the world at large to see past the veil of mist and snow but also Government Departments and agencies like the Anthropological Survey of India (Calcutta) and the Survey of India (Dehra Dun). Much research of immense practical benefit to the country has already been done. But the Himalaya will never fully reveal itself. There is need to go to it again and again, to involve oneself more and more deeply in its mysteries, to engage in a constant, tireless endeavour to acquire greater and yet greater and more comprehensive knowledge. There is need for extensive and intensive field studies to understand the land and its people, their perils and their problems, their past and their present. Without such studies it is vain to draw up welfare and development programmes. Indeed there is an urgent need to set up an independent institute devoted exclusively to Himalayan studies, along with a museum of anthropological, botanical, and geological collections and a library of manuscripts of cultural and historical importance. This would not only keep up our interest and involvement in the Himalaya but also give them shape and direction.

## CHAPTER TWO

# THE LAND

THE HIMALAYA comprises a series of parallel ranges stretching curvilinearly between 74°E and 95°E. Its physiography is marked by ranges northwards and southwards of the main Himalaya range and the Brahmaputra, Ganga, and Indus river systems. The central ridge or the crest line of the Himalaya forms the principal watershed between the rivers draining southward into India and northward into Tibet. Owing to structural weakness at places where the curves are sharp, great rivers forge their way southward through the main range and then flow along the alignment of the spurs, making transverse valleys. These are the antecedent rivers, perhaps older than the Himalaya.

The Lesser Himalaya is the Himachal of the Sanskrit tradition. The term *Himachal* now applies not to the entire Himalaya from Assam to Kashmir but to a part of the Himalaya, i.e. the Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh in the Western Himalaya. The Outer Himalaya mountains in the eastern and central sectors rise abruptly from the foothills, known as the *Dooar/Duar* (from the Sanskrit *Dvara*, Gate) or the *Tarai* (marshy lowland) successively. The Duars, made up of sandy and gravel-like material and varying in width from ten to twenty miles, are covered by thick sal forests and are ideally suited for sport. The forests are full of wild elephants. The Duar climate is hot and moist, and so enervating that even those who are native to the soil generally avoid staying in this section of the

country. The Darranga of Northern Assam and the Darbhanga/Dvar Vanga of North Bihar (which borders upon Nepal) belong to a fascinating historical tradition. The Tarai belt, which extends from the Tista River in the east to the Ramganga River in the west, separates the foothills and the great plains of North India. The Darjeeling section of the Tarai is called Morang. People also often apply the term Tarai to the Western Duars. The narrow, dry, boulder-strewn tract, which lies immediately above the Tarai and below the foothills, is called Bhabar. In Nepal, the Bhabar is called Char Kose Jhadi, after the belief that the average width of this forest tract is char kos (eight miles). Char Kose Jhadi is well known for big game, especially the rhinoceros. A five-to-fifteen-mile-wide zone of low hills (made of young soft rocks, including sandstone, shale, and conglomerates) and valleys bordering upon the plains, known as the Siwalik, intervene between the foothills and the Outer Himalaya west of the Western Tarai of Uttar Pradesh.

The lesser Himalaya zone leads to the zone of the Middle Himalaya, varying in height from 6,000 feet to 15,000 feet and rising steeply to merge into the third zone, the Great Himalaya.

The Great Himalaya is the Himadri, the snowy Uttarakhand (Northern Zone) of the Sanskrit tradition. The term Uttarakhand now applies not only to the Uttarakhand of the entire Great Himalaya from Assam to Jammu and Kashmir but also to a part of it, i.e. the Uttarakhand Division of Uttar Pradesh. The Great Himalaya, consisting of glaciers and peaks perpetually covered with snow, culminates in the highlands or plateau of Tibet and has the shape of a magnificent arc. Almost all great peaks, from the 25,445-foot-high Namcha Barwa on the Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) bend in the east to the 26,660-foot-high Nanga Parbat on the Indus (Sindhu) bend in the west, belong to this zone. The two great pillars of Namcha Barwa and Nanga Parbat support the great column of Chomolungma or Mount Everest, the earth's highest peak.

There are three distinct types of drainage in the Himalaya:

(1) the major rivers of Assam, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, and Uttarakhand, whether *rising from the southern or the northern slopes of the Great Himalaya*, have their basins parallel to the radial ridges and hence are transverse to the main range; (2) the rivers of the Punjab and of Jammu and Kashmir run parallel to each other on account of the direction of the Lesser Himalaya but at an oblique angle to the Great Himalaya; and (3) the rivers rising beyond the Great Himalaya have their basins parallel to it until suitable gorges in this barrier enable them to forge their way to the south. The Indus, the Satluj, the Karnali (a branch of the Ghagra), the Arun (a branch of the Kosi), the Manas, and the Tsangpo come in the last category.

Three major climatic zones have been recognized in the Himalaya: (1) the hot and humid zone of the Duar, the Tarai, and the Siwalik foothills; (2) the cooler zone of the Lesser Himalaya; and (3) the snowy cold of the Great Himalaya. Although each of the four elements of weather—temperature, pressure, precipitation, and wind—varies with altitude, temperature is the most important of them all. The relation between altitude and natural vegetation is clearly discernible. Tropical forests occur at low altitudes. These gradually merge into subtropical forests in the central zone. Temperate forests grow at high altitudes. Coniferous vegetation prevails in areas above 12,000 feet and below the line of snow.

## NEFA

NEFA, the easternmost part of the Himalaya in India, borders upon Burma in the east, Bhutan in the west, and Tibet in the north. To its south lies the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam. The 21,450-foot-high Gori Chen is among the highest peaks in the territory. The two-mile-broad and seven-and-a-half-mile-long Apa Tani plateau in the Subansiri District, nearly 5,000 feet above the level of the sea and twenty square miles in area, is a unique feature in NEFA. Several great rivers rising in Tibet beyond the Himalaya, like



the Lohit, the Siang, the Subansiri, and the Kameng, pierce the central ridge into India, and several high passes cross it in other places. The land route from India to China passes through here. In the heyday of Buddhism, monks from India frequented this great highway in their mission to promote the culture of India in China: Sanskrit inscriptions in Yunnan so eloquently testify to this noble activity between India and China in those ancient days.

The Pemako Valley, north of Siang, is now a part of Tibet although it lies on the southern side of the central ridge of the Himalaya and is thus geographically an integral part of Siang. Till about a hundred and fifty years ago it was, so to speak, a no man's land, unexplored and uninhabited. Following its discovery by Bhutanese lamas who strayed into the area in the course of a pilgrimage, the first Monpa settlements came up. It became a part of Tibet with the Indo-Tibetan boundary agreement of 1914, which recognized the McMahon line as the boundary between India and Tibet.

The entire area of NEFA, with the exception of the small strip of the foothills, is constituted of a highly mountainous belt comprising spurs radiating southward from the crest line. The pattern is a little varied in Western NEFA, where ridges like the Bomdi La, Se La, and Thag La (la means "mountain pass" in the Tibetan language) run parallel to the Great Himalaya. In the Subansiri District spurs take a north-west-southeast turn and run parallel to each other, the intervening valleys being occupied by the tributaries of the Subansiri River. East of the Subansiri District, the spurs assume a north-south orientation and merge into the foothills. West of Longju (9,000 feet), immediately south of the Indo-Tibetan international boundary in Subansiri, the altitude of the peaks varies between 18,000 feet and 21,000 feet. The relief in the Lohit District varies between 2,000 feet and 17,000 feet. The crest line forms India's northern and north-eastern boundary with Tibet. Around the north-eastern curve, there is a gradual fall in altitude till the crest line dips to as low as 9,000 feet. Towards the east, along the Indo-Burmese border, it descends to 15,000 feet and even less

until it averages about 6,000 feet in the southern Patkoi hills.

Several great rivers along with their tributaries, like the Lohit and the Dibang of the Lohit District, the Dihang, the Siyom, and the Yamne of the Siang District, the Subansiri and the Kamla of the Subansiri District, and the Kameng and the Tawang Chu (from *chhu*, which means "river" in the Tibetan language) of the Kameng District closely cut up the entire NEFA territory. The Lohit, which flows westward from Zayul in Tibet, joins the Dibang and later the Brahmaputra north of Dibrugarh. The Dihang-Lohit basin is geologically a disturbed area and lies in a seismic zone. The Lohit and Siang areas were severely rocked during the great Assam earthquake of 1950. The Siang, known as the Tsangpo in Tibet and the Brahmaputra in Assam, after following for a time a latitudinal course, turns southward and enters the Siang District in a village called Gelling. The Siang is known as the Dihang in the lower parts of the Abor (now called Adi) hills. Both names mean "great river." The Siang Valley lies for the most part at a height of 4,000 feet or less, and the river has a number of streams, so that it is not navigable at all. One cannot negotiate it even on a bamboo raft. Its important tributaries in Siang are the beautiful Yang Sang Chu and the Yamne River (with their origin in the 13,000-foot-high Abroka Pass on the Lohit-Siang divide), which joins it from the east, and the Siyom, which joins it from the north-west. The Subansiri River (from Tibet) enters Subansiri at Longju. Its important tributaries in Subansiri are the Kamla, the Khru, and the Sipi. The Tawang Chu from the Mago mountain district joins the Nyam Jang Chu from Lhobrak (Tibet) at Bleting, near the border of Bhutan. The smaller streams swell during the rainy season and occupy low-lying channels.

NEFA experiences a variety of climatic conditions. On an average the territory receives every year about 200 inches of rainfall. The amount of rainfall decreases from east to west and varies on the windward and leeward slopes of the mountains. The hills facing the plains of Assam receive the

full force of the monsoon from the Bay of Bengal. The temperature is higher at lower altitudes in the south and lower at higher altitudes in the north. The climate of the foothills is similar to that of the plains of Assam. Tropical heat, together with heavy rainfall and high humidity in the valleys, makes the climate enervating and thus hard for human habitation. Evergreen forests, especially bamboo forests, cover the foothills. Cane is the most important item of the forest produce. Coniferous forests, especially pine forests, cover the ranges from about 8,000 feet to about 14,000 feet above the level of the sea.

### BHUTAN

Bhutan, situated in the Eastern Himalaya, borders upon Assam and NEFA in the east, the plains of Assam and Bengal in the south, Bengal and Sikkim in the west, and Tsang (Southern Tibet) and the Chumbi Valley of Tibet in the north. The 24,600-foot-high Gangkarpunzum is the highest peak in the Bhutan Himalaya. The superb cone of the 23,930-foot-high Chomolhari, a mountain considered sacred both in Bhutan and in Tibet, dominates Bhutan. According to legend and tradition, Tibet's first king, Nyathi Tsanpo, went up from India along the Manas Valley route, the historical highway between Eastern India and Central Tibet. Pilgrims from Tibet to the Hajo shrine near Gauhati in Assam have also always trudged along it.

The name *Bhutan* is derived from the Sanskrit *Bhotanta*, i.e. the end (anta) of Tibet (*Bhot*) or the borderland of Tibet. The Bhutanese, however, call their country *Drukyl*, land of thunder. They call themselves *Drukpas* (people of the Druk country). This is because the Bhutanese belong to the Druk Sect of Lamaism, which has been the State religion of Bhutan since 1616, when it was established there by Shabdung Nawang Namgyal.

The *Pele La* range, which runs from the north to the south through the middle of Bhutan between the Punakha Valley and the Tongsa Valley, divides the country into two, almost

equal parts, the eastern part and the western part. It also divides Bhutan ethnically and linguistically. The people of Eastern Bhutan, their dialects, and their customs are different from those of Western Bhutan. The 12,000-foot-high Pelc La is right in the centre of the range.

There are three distinct physiographic zones in Bhutan. Southern Bhutan consists of a close network of low hills. The strip of the Bhutan Duars is a flat, level strip of country, averaging twenty-two miles in width, running along the foot of the hills of Bhutan from the east to the west. Its chief characteristics are the numerous rivers and streams which intersect it in every direction, and the large tracts of sal forests and heavy grass and reed jungles, in places impenetrable by man. The scenery in the north of the Duars, along the foot of the hills, where the large rivers debouch upon the plains, is very grand and beautiful, especially at the point where the Sankosh River leaves the hills. For five to ten miles before reaching the hills of Bhutan, the land rises gradually. In this tract the soil is only three to four feet deep, with a substratum of gravel and shingle; and in the summer the beds of the streams for some miles beyond the hills of Bhutan are dry, the water reappearing farther down. Owing to the difficulty of procuring water, there are no villages in this tract.

Central Bhutan has beautiful valleys and gentle slopes. The Tashigang, Bumthang, Punakha, Thimphu, and Ha valleys are comparatively broad and flat. The rivers have a general slope from the north to the south, where they eventually join the Brahmaputra River. The Punakha Valley is the least elevated of all the valleys of Bhutan. Rice is the principal crop of this valley.

The general direction of the ranges which separate the valley of Central Bhutan is from the north-west to the south-west in Western Bhutan and from the north-east to the south-east in Eastern Bhutan. North Bhutan consists of high snow-clad mountains which separate Bhutan from Tibet.

The rivers Manas, Sankosh, Raidak, and Torsa drain

Bhutan. The union of the Lhobrak Chu, the Tashi Yangtse, the Bumthang, and the Tongsa forms the Manas. Bhutan's largest river. The Lhobrak Chu, the main tributary of the Manas, rises in Tibet beyond the Great Himalaya. The Sankosh, the Raidak, and the Torsa, known in their upper courses in Bhutan as the Sankoshi, the Wang Chu, and the Amo Chu respectively, start either from the Great Himalaya or beyond and flow to the plains of Bengal transversely to the ranges. The Sankoshi and its various tributaries drain the Great Himalaya zone between the 24,784-foot-high Kulha Kangri and the 23,000-foot-high Masakang, including the Punakha Valley. The Sankoshi is the dividing line between the Eastern and Western Duars as well as between Assam and Bengal. Along with its tributaries, the Wang Chu, which rises on the south-western slopes of the 23,930-foot-high Chomolhari, drains the valleys of Thimphu, Paro, and Ha. It joins the Brahmaputra at Kurigram. The Amo Chu, which rises in the 15,219-foot-high Tang La, drains Western Bhutan and the entire Chumbi Valley of Tibet. The natural avenue for those who would travel from India to Tibet is the one that goes up the Amo Chu Valley. The Amo Chu, known as the Torsa in its lower course, joins the Brahmaputra south of the Alipur Duar. The Dhansiri River forms the boundary between the lower parts of Bhutan and NEFA. The Jaldhaka River, called De Chu in the upper part of its course in the hills, separates Bhutan from the Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of North Bengal.

Bhutan experiences a variety of climatic conditions. The Duars have a tropical climate, and the vegetation consists of bamboo, fern, and palm. Different varieties of flora, pine, and rhododendron cover the higher Bhutan Himalaya. Farther north the temperature is cold. Indeed it is severely so during winter. Most of the Bhutanese peasants have two sets of farms and pastures, one set at higher altitudes and the other at lower altitudes. In the winter they move down to the farms and pastures at lower altitudes; and in the summer they move up to the farms and pastures at higher altitudes.

## SIKKIM

Sikkim, situated in the Eastern Himalaya, borders upon Bhutan in the east, the Darjeeling District in the south, Nepal in the west, and the Chumbi Valley and the Tsang region of Tibet in the north. Geographically the catchment area of the Tista River and all its affluents as far down as the northern plain of Bengal, including the entire area of the Darjeeling hills, is a unique wedge between Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet.

The Chumbi Valley, which is now a part of Tibet, lies on the southern side of the central ridge of the Himalaya. It was a part of Sikkim till almost the end of the nineteenth century. The people and the language of the area are more or less the same as those of North-Eastern Sikkim and North-Western Bhutan and differ widely from those of Lhasa or any other part of Tibet. The Valley is thus very much like the Pemako Valley in Siang in NEFA, which also is a part of Tibet today in spite of its location on the southern side of the Himalayan watershed.

The 28,216-foot-high Kangchenjunga (Treasury of Five Snows) on the natural border between Nepal and Sikkim is the third highest mountain of the world. It is also the most beautiful and dominating feature of Sikkim. Siniolchu and Pandim are among the other beautiful peaks of the Sikkim Himalaya. Kangchenjunga is essentially a Sikkimese mountain. For centuries it has been worshipped both by Sikkimese Buddhists and by Nepalese Hindus. It blocks the heavy monsoon (from the Bay of Bengal), which unburdens itself almost completely in Sikkim. Hence Sikkim is the wettest country in the entire Eastern Himalaya.

The entire country, including the Darjeeling hills, is a closed basin between two parallel and deeply intersected transverse ridges, Donkya La and Singali La, about ninety miles long. The general trend of the mountain system is from the east to the west, but the chief ridges, Donkya La and Singali La, run from the north to the south. The hills rise from the plains of North Bengal. The altitude of the coun-

try varies from 5,700 feet at Gangtok in Eastern Sikkim to 12,300 feet at Cnatong in the north. The permanent snow-line is approximately at 16,000 feet. The Donkya La range, which stretches southward from the culminating point of the extensive mountain mass of the immense 23,190-foot-high Donkya Peak and on which are situated the 14,390-foot-high Jelep La, the 14,140-foot-high Nathu La, and the 16,000-foot-high Tanglar La, is the main feature of Eastern Sikkim. It separates Sikkim from Bhutan and Tibet in the east, forms the boundary between Bhutan and Sikkim for the greater part, and separates the basins of the Amo Chu in the east from that of the Tista River in the west. At Gyemo Chen, the trijunction point of the Bhutan-Sikkim-Tibet boundary, it bifurcates into two great spurs: one runs south-east; and the other, south-west. In the west, the Singali La range, which stretches south from the Kangchenjunga group of peaks, forms the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal.

The Donkya La range is much more lofty than the Singali La range. The drainage from the eastern flank of the Donkya La range is into the Amo Chu, the upper part of the course of which is in Tibet and the lower part in Bhutan. The drainage from its western flank is into the Rangpo, one of the eastern feeders of the Tista. The drainage from the eastern flank of the Singali La range is into the great Rangit River, which feeds the Tista from the west. The drainage from its western flank is into the Tamar River in Eastern Nepal.

The mountain-girdled basin of Sikkim is the catchment area of the headwaters of the Tista River and its affluents, like the Lachung Chu, the Lachen Chu, the Zemu Chu, the Talung Chu, the Rangpo, and the Rangit. The Tista basin, occupying the axis of an overfold, is structurally "inverted," the five peaks of Kangchenjunga representing the core. The Tista drains all of Sikkim, and, after travelling through the Darjeeling District, joins the Brahmaputra River in the Rangpur District. The Rangit, chiefly fed by the rainfall of the outer ranges of the Senehal and Singali hills, is the most important tributary of the Tista.

Sikkim has the typical mountain climate: an increase by a few feet in altitude affects temperature and rainfall conditions. Up to an altitude of 3,500 feet above the level of the sea, rainfall is heavy and temperature relatively high. The climate is tropical, and there are thick tropical forests with bamboo and sal as the dominant species. The temperate zone extends between 3,500 feet and 12,000 feet. The higher Himalaya zone stretches from 12,000 feet to 16,000 feet. Beyond that it is perpetual snow. The onset of the monsoon in the month of May coincides with the southward shift of the Inter-Tropical Convergence. Moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal, after discharging moisture in the Assam Himalaya, travel westward and become the main source of precipitation in Sikkim.

### NEPAL

Nepal lies in the Central Himalaya. Historically, before Prithvi Narayan Shah started in 1769 the process of the integration of the entire country between Sikkim in the east, the great plains of India in the south, Kumaun in the west, and the plateau of Tibet in the north, the name Nepal denoted only the area where the present capital, Kathmandu, is situated. This process culminated in the integration of the principality of Bajhang in the summer of 1959.

Sagarmatha (known outside as Mount Everest), Makalu, Cho Oyu, Gauri Shankar, Gosainkund, Manaslu, Dhaulagiri, and Annapurna, all over 26,000 feet above the level of the sea, are among the highest peaks of the Nepal Himalaya as well as the world.

Several rivers rising in Tibet beyond the Great Himalaya, like the Arun in the east and the Karnali in the west, pierce the central ridge into Nepal, and high passes like the 19,050-foot Nangpa La cross it in other places. The Kosi, with its great tributaries like the Arun, is the most important river of Eastern Nepal. The Tamar, the Arun, and the Sun join at Tribeni and form the great Saptakosi, known as the Kosi in Bihar, the third largest river in the river system in the



Himalaya. It drains the Himalaya between the great peaks of Kangchenjunga and Gosainthan. It leaves its mountain home at Chhatra, pierces through the Eastern Tarai of Nepal, and joins the Ganga south of Kursela in Bihar. The Kosi has been changing its course, and consequently there is a heavy charge of silt and detritus in its bed. The Gandaki, with its great tributaries like the Krishna and the Seti, drains Central Nepal. From the junction of the Gandaki with the Trisuli at Devghat, a little north of the Indo-Nepalese international boundary, the Gandaki is known as the Narayani. The great Saptagandaki, with its tributaries, is the most important river of Central-Western Nepal. Sapta (seven) in the case of the Gandaki is a mystical number. The Karnali and its tributaries like the Bhen and the Seti drain Western Nepal. The Karnali and the Kali join each other and flow as Sharada, called Ghagra or Sarayu, lower down. The Sarayu joins the Ganga at Chapra. Of the three main rivers flowing from the Nepal Himalaya, the Karnali is the most navigable in its lower parts in the hills of Nepal.

There are four distinct physical zones in Nepal. The dense forest zone of the Tarai leads to the foothills. The Lesser Himalaya rises gently from the Tarai to about 2,000 feet and then abruptly in steep and almost perpendicular escarpments of the Churia and Mahabharat ranges. The altitude of the Middle Himalaya ranges from 9,000 feet to 15,000 feet.

Temperature conditions in Nepal are of an extremely complex pattern. There is a general decrease in temperature as the altitude increases. Fogs and forests are common in the valleys, and night temperature is below the freezing-point. The south-west monsoon winds are the primary source of precipitation. The average annual rainfall in the Tarai region is fifty inches; in the foothills it is seventy inches. In the higher valleys local variations occur in proportion to exposure. The rain-bearing monsoon winds in the months of June-September also make a difference. The climate of the Tarai region is hot and humid; that of the Lesser Himalaya, cool and humid; and that of the Great Himalaya, cold and

dry. The Northern Nepalese are organized in groups, each in a village, and to every such village there are a number of subsidiary villages to which the members of the group concerned resort in the different seasons, according to the location of their summer and winter pastures.

The natural vegetation zones of Nepal coincide with the physiographic divisions of the country. Dense swampy forests of sal and sisaun cover the Tarai. The southern part of the Middle Himalaya encloses several fertile valleys, including the Bagmati Valley, which is over 200 square miles. The southern part of the Great Himalaya, except for the protected valleys, is bare and devoid of any vegetation owing to the thinness of the layer of the soil and the steep gradients. Rugged, inter-stream divides separate the deep valleys, some of which have, in their lower reaches, broad flood plains which are important for agricultural purposes. Conifers like birch, fir, larch, pine, and spruce are the dominant species in these forests.

### UTTARAKHAND

Uttarakhand, which lies in the Central Himalaya between the Kali and Satluj rivers, borders upon Nepal in the east, the plains of Uttar Pradesh in the south, the Mahasu and Kinnaur districts of Himachal Pradesh in the west, and the Ngari region of Tibet in the north. The border areas, which constitute one-third of Uttarakhand, generally consist of wild gorges, barren rocks, and snow. Byans, Chandans, Darma, Jolar, Niti, Mana and Nelang are the only valleys where human habitation is possible.

The border of Uttar Pradesh with Tibet is a range of great altitude. There are several high passes, such as the 16,390-foot Lipu Lek (*Lek* means "mountain pass" in the Nepali language), the 18,510-foot Dama, the 16,300-foot Kungri Bingri, the 16,390-foot Shalsal, the 16,628-foot Niti, the 18,400-foot Mana (Dungri La), and the 17,480 foot Jelu Khaga, which provide passage from Uttarakhand through the Great Himalaya to Tibet. There are several high peaks, such

as the 25,645-foot Nanda Devi, the 25,447-foot Kailash, the 23,360-foot Trisul, the 23,213-foot Satopanth, the 23,184-foot Dunagiri, the 22,650-foot Panchchuli, the 22,510-foot Nanda Kot, and the 21,640-foot Nilkantha. The slopes and defiles of the lofty snowy ranges abound in ice-fields and glaciers such as the Milam, the Pindari, the Bhagirathi, and the Gangotri, which stretch for miles and miles. The layers of ice, several hundred feet in thickness, bear witness to immemorial centuries. The Bhyundar Ganga, the great valley of flowers, and the Nanda Devi Sanctuary are scenic spots of great beauty in Uttarakhand.

Several great rivers like the Kali, the Bhagirathi, and their tributaries drain Uttarakhand. The Kali, which rises near the India-Nepal-Tibet trijunction, follows a south-westerly course and runs almost at a right angle to the central range. The principal source of the Kali is the glacier, Milam. In its upper course the Kali and its two affluents, the Darna and the Lissar, flow in long parallel beds five miles apart. The Dhaul and Gauri rivers from Darna and Johar join it later. The Alakananda and the Bhagirathi are the most important headstreams of the Ganga. The two unite at Devprayag. The source of the Bhagirathi is the glacier Gangotri in the Gangotri group of peaks. The Ganga enters the plains at Haridwar.

Uttarakhand experiences every grade of climate. The first, the outermost zone, has a tropical climate marked by the sultry heat of the dry summer months and followed by a season of rains and low temperature. The second zone has mild and wet summers and long and severe winters. The third zone comprises high snowy peaks, characterized by long cold winters and short cool summers. Precipitation is in the form of snow. The annual rainfall decreases from east to west. The distribution of climate is also longitudinal. The people of northern fringes have two sets of houses, one for permanent residence and the other for temporary settlement.

Uttarakhand has various types of vegetation. There is a profuse growth of sal trees in the Tarai region. There is a

luxuriant growth of bamboos, *chirs*, *kails* (a kind of cedar), oaks, and silver firs between 5,000 feet and 11,000 feet, where the climate is temperate. The coniferous forests occur at higher altitudes. One can see birch and rhododendron following deodar, pine, and spruce, important coniferous trees, as one moves up.

### KINNAUR, LAHUL, AND SPITI

Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti, which lie in the Western Himalaya, rugged and mountainous in an extraordinary degree, border upon Garhwal in the east, Jammu and Kashmir in the west, and the Ngari region of Tibet in the north. The highest mountain ridges in Kinnaur run almost south-east and north-west or parallel to the outer range of the Himalaya. The rugged character of the area is conspicuous in every part of the district except in the portion adjoining the Mahasu District. The holy 22,038-foot-high Kailash is the most dominant feature of Kinnaur, even though the 22,280-foot-high Rio Purgyal is Kinnaur's highest peak. There are several passes leading from Kinnaur through the Great Himalaya into Tibet, with an average height of 14,000 feet.

The face of the country is marked by deep river valleys. The Satluj Valley, cutting across the whole district from north-east to south-west, is the longest of these valleys. The right bank of the Satluj River is generally higher than the other, the villages are to be found at a height of 7,000 feet to 8,000 feet. Arable land extends to 11,000 feet. Oaks and pines cover this region. Beyond this are the pastures where the shepherds tend their flocks during the summer months. The broad Baspa Valley, like the Bhyundar Glen in North Garhwal, is the most beautiful valley of Kinnaur. The Tudong, Darbung, and Hangrang valleys are arid and mountainous.

The Satluj, which rises in Tibet beyond the Great Himalaya, enters India by the 11,000-foot-high Shipki La and flows from one end of the district to the other in a south-westerly direction. This river and its upper tributaries drain

Kinnaur. It has different names in different places. The name Samandar (from the Sanskrit *samudra*, sea) is popularly used by the southern Kinnauras. The northern Kinnauras call it Langshing, Muksung, or Shungti. The Baspa and the Spiti are the main tributaries of the Satluj. The Baspa flows from the south-east and joins the Satluj at Karchham near the centre of the valley. The Spiti, the longest tributary, flows from the north-west through Spiti and the Hangrang area of Kinnaur and joins the Satluj at Khabo near Namgya. The Satluj issues from the hills at Rupa.

Kinnaur has two climatic zones—the wet and the arid. In Lower Kinnaur summer is longer, and in Upper Kinnaur, winter. During the long winter months, there is frequent snowfall. Owing to the parallel trend of the lofty mountain ranges, only the lower southern parts like Nichar and Sang La receive heavy rainfall. On the higher slopes, precipitation is in the form of snow.

Spiti lies beyond the Great Himalaya. The mean elevation of Spiti is 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. All along its eastern and north-eastern boundary run mountains which are a continuation of the Ladakh range. The 20,108-foot-high Shila peak is the most dominating feature of Spiti. Passes like the 16,000-foot-high Bhaba, the 17,000-foot-high Mana, the 21,000-foot-high Manirang, the 15,754-foot-high Soma La (between the Parbati Valley of Kulu and the Pin Valley of Spiti), the 13,500-foot-high Rohtang, the 18,300-foot-high Parang La, and the 17,470-foot-high Tagalang La provide access to Lahul and Spiti from Kinnaur, Kulu, Chamba, Kishtwar, Zangskar, and Ladakh.

The Spiti Chu, the main river of Spiti, rises in the glaciers of the 15,300-foot-high Kunzum Pass on the Lahul-Spiti divide and runs for seventy miles through Spiti proper in east-south-east direction, for it flows through Tibet, enters Kinnaur at Sanjham, and ultimately pours its waters into the Satluj at Namgya, south of the Shipki La. The Pin River, the main tributary of the Spiti, rises in the Bhaba Pass on the Kinnaur-Spiti divide. Spiti and Pin are the main valleys of Spiti.

Spiti is in the arid zone and experiences extremes of cold: snow, and desiccation. Summer is short and mild owing to the height; winter is long and severe. During the summer months a thin atmospheric insolation in the day and rapid fall of temperature at night cause disintegration of rocks. Most of the winter precipitation is in the form of snow.

Spiti is barren for the most part. What little vegetation there is, is thin and patchy. Owing to the severe climate, scanty precipitation, and intense cold, there are hardly any forest tracts. All that one can see is a stunted growth of birch, poplar, and willow along the rivers and streams. There are meadows and pastures here and there high up on the slopes. Shepherds from Chamba and Kangra go up to Spiti along with their flocks of sheep and goats during the summer months.

## LADAKH

Ladakh, the northernmost part of the Himalaya in India, is more than half of the total area of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh is also India's largest district. The Karakoram and Kunlun ranges in the north and the Zangskar range in the south provide Ladakh with natural boundaries. The Karakoram range constitutes Ladakh's northern boundary with Central Asia. There are no such formidable barriers in the east and the west.

The south-east and north-west mountain ranges run parallel to each other. This is the most striking feature of Ladakh. The Karakoram range has the largest number of giant peaks in the world. This great massif has several high cols, which connect India and Central Asia. The great caravan route from Leh to Yarkand lies over the 18,290-foot-high Karakoram Pass and the 17,480-foot-high Sasser La. The eastern end of the Karakoram range is connected with the western end of the Kunlun range, which skirts the Lingzi Thang-Aksai Chin plateau on the northern side. The Ladakh range, starting from the Indus-Shayok confluence and extending beyond the eastern frontiers of Ladakh, divides the

district into two parts. This unbroken chain traverses through Zangskar and Rupshu and through Chumurti in Western Tibet.

The direction of the mountain ranges determines the course of the rivers. The Indus, the longest river in the Himalaya, rises near Manasarovar in Western Tibet and flows westward, entering Ladakh near the frontier village of Demchok. The Shayok River, the principal tributary of the Indus, rises in the glaciers of the Eastern Karakoram. From the point where it issues till it reaches the village Shayok, it runs west-south-west. Then, after going with the Nubra River, it flows almost parallel to the Indus until their confluence west of Khapalu. The Zangskar River, which rises in the vicinity of the 16,047-foot-high Baralacha La, meets the Indus at Nyemo. The Waka, Suru, and Dras rivers, which rise in the north-western glaciers of Zangskar, are also important tributaries of the Indus.

Climatically Ladakh is located entirely in the Great Himalaya zone and is known for its extreme aridity. Great extremes of heat and cold and excessive dryness, chiefly because of the height of the landmass, characterize Ladakh. Its general aspect is extreme barrenness. The dryness of climate increases with height. Rainfall is scanty. Winter is long and severe. Most of the precipitation is in the form of snow and varies from place to place. At Leh it is only a few feet, but at Kargil and especially at Machoi in the Dras Valley but close to the 11,570-foot-high Zoji La, it is up to twenty feet a year.

Natural vegetation is scanty. The birch, the poplar, and the willow are found along the water courses. The poplar is the most valuable source of wood in the country, especially in the construction of bridges and houses.

The entire Himalaya borderland from NEFA in the east to Ladakh in the west comprises a mountain complex with parallel ranges both in the east-west and in the north-south direction. There are three distinct climatic zones according

to the altitude zones. NEFA, Bhutan, and Sikkim are in the wet zone. The Singali La range between Sikkim and Nepal works as the great barrier for winds from the Bay of Bengal. Hence the maximum precipitation on Mount Kangchenjunga on the Singali La ridge. Nepal and Uttarakhand are in the middle zone, neither too wet nor too dry. Kinnaur, Lahul and Spiti, and Ladakh are in the dry arid zone. Summer is short; winter, long and severe. The severe cold and the heavy snow cause hardship to animals and people alike. Climatic and physiographic conditions determine the economy of the people, the types of animals on which they live, their migration and settlement patterns, and many other aspects of life. The rivers in the Himalaya facilitate, rather than inhibit, the movement of the people during their summer and winter migrations. They determine not only the areas where the people may live, but also the routes of communication between India and Central Asia.



## CHAPTER THREE

# THE PEOPLE

THE HIMALAYA has been the homeland of various peoples from before the dawn of history. According to Sanskrit epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as well as the Puranas, which are a storehouse of the values that sustain India's life and culture, the Kulind, Kirat, Kinnar, Khas, Dard, and other tribes inhabited the Himalaya in ancient times. There have been migrations of people from time to time for a number of reasons. The most important of these reasons is the location of holy places in and around the Himalaya, so that people from both India and Central Asia have always felt drawn to the Himalaya. Other important reasons are trade and politics.

If we consider the matter from the point of view of the ethnic complexion of the Himalaya, there have been migrations within the Himalaya itself. The Khampti, Singpho, and Mishmi groups of Lohit migrated from Upper Burma. The Monpas of Siang migrated from North-East Bhutan in the nineteenth century. The ethnic admixture that obtains in Bhutan was originally due to Tibetan rule in Bhutan in the ninth century. Excessiveness of the land tax impelled the Lepchas of Sikkim to migrate to the adjoining parts of Western Bhutan and Eastern Nepal during the early period of the present dynasty of Sikkim. The Limbus and the Rais migrated from the west to Sikkim during the Gorkha occupation of South-West Sikkim during 1778-88. High-caste Hindus migrated to the southern parts of the present West-

ern Nepal, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh during the Muslim invasions of North India in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Bhotiyas in the northern part of Uttarakhand perhaps migrated from Tibet before the seventh century. The Mongoloid tribes of Kinnair and Lahul migrated there during the eighth and ninth centuries with Tibet's expansion southwards and westwards. The Dard and Mon people of Ladakh migrated from Gilgit and Kashmir in early times.

### NEFA

NEFA is the homeland of several tribes, Indo-Mongoloid ethnically and Tibeto-Burman linguistically. The origin of most of the ethnic groups of NEFA lies beyond the natural confines of India in the east and the north. The Khamptis of Lohit migrated from the region between the north-eastern tip of Assam and the Irrawady Valley of Burma (called Iikampti Long by the Upper Burmese) towards the end of the eighteenth century and belong to the same stock as the Ahoms of Assam. The Singphos, who migrated to neighbouring areas on the break-up of the Northern Shans, first appeared in the upper Brahmaputra Valley during the rebellion of the Mattak tribe against Raja Gourinath Singh (r. 1780-95) of Assam about 1790. The Mishmis, the main bulk of the people in Lohit, also migrated from Burma: they have legends which refer to their migration from Burma. The Zakhriings migrated from Zayul in Tibet. The Monpas of the northernmost part of Siang migrated from Bhutan to the Pemako Valley via the Dhapo and Kongpo regions of Tibet in the nineteenth century. According to tradition, Guni Padmasambhava meditated in the caves of the Pemako Valley. The Tibetans still go there as hermits and pilgrims. The Monpas of the Valley, being originally the inhabitants of Eastern Bhutan, used to acknowledge the Maharaja of Bhutan as their lord and sovereign till in 1914 the Valley officially became a part of Tibet. The folklore of the Abors of Siang (including the minor groups) points

to their origin in the north beyond the Himalaya, but their occupations and religious beliefs and practices betray their connexion with the Mishmi and other southern NEFA groups rather than with the northern NEFA groups. The Nishangs (Nisis), the Apa Tanis, and the Bangnis of Subansiri also claim to have come from Tibet, but the memories of their "history men" seem to relate only to the last stage of a population movement which may have changed its course more than once. The Mikirs of the foothills of South-West Subansiri have been settled there by the administration for developing permanent agriculture during the last fifty years. The Sherdukpas of Southern Kameng even now migrate along with their livestock to the foothills in the cold months every year.

The origin of the term Mishmi is obscure. Since 1947, the Abors have been known officially as Adis. The term Memba, by which the Monpas of Siang are known among the Adi groups, approximates to the actual term Monpa (Lowlander). The Mishings are popularly known as Miris. The Nishangs are popularly and officially known as Daflas. The Bangni, incorrectly called the Dafla, means "the men." The term Sherdukpa (People of Eastern Bhutan) is Bhutanese/Tibetan. The Monpas, the Khambas, and the Sherdukpas are popularly known as Bhotiyas. All the popular terms for the tribes are Assamese.

It is, however, important to note here that the name Bhotiya is used to describe not only the NEFA tribes mentioned above but also all people of Tibetan origin in the entire Himalaya borderland. It is derived from *Bhot*, the Sanskrit name for Tibet.

Agriculture is the primary occupation of the people of NEFA. The Mishmis, the Adis, the Daflas, the Akas, the Buguns, and the Mijis practise *jhum* or a slash-and-burn type of cultivation. In the *jhum* type of cultivation, ploughing is not possible as the surface is uneven. The Khampis, the Singphos, and the Apa Tanis practise a permanent type of cultivation. They use the plough and animal power for tilling the soil. The Sherdukpas and the Monpas practise both

jhum and permanent cultivation. The Sherdukpas use the ox to draw the plough, whereas the Monpas use the dzo (male hybrid of cow and yak) for this purpose. Except the Sherdukpas and the Monpas nobody uses any manure. Of course, the ashes and unburnt leaves in the jhum type of cultivation (which get mixed with the soil after a couple of rains) serve the purpose of manure.

Besides agriculture, the people also have other, secondary occupations like animal husbandry, fishing, hunting, and trade. The Khamptis, the Zakhings, and the Monpas do not, however, fish and hunt because of Buddhist influence. Alone among these various tribes, the Khamptis capture wild elephants and sell them for a good price. The Taroas excel in the arts of boatmanship and fishing. The Mishmis, the Adis, the Daffas, and the Miris raise mithuns, which play a great role in their socio-economic life. There is community hunting among the Adis, who are born hunters.

The people carry on both inter-village and inter-area trade. Formerly all transactions used to be generally by barter, but now cash transactions are becoming popular. Traditionally the people have had trade relations with the people in the south and the north. The Khamptis get from the plains salt, ornaments, and household goods in exchange for rough, cotton clothes and wild elephants. The Singphos and the Miris get from the plains salt, cotton, and household goods in exchange for vegetables, chillis, and spices. The Taroas have always traded with the Zakhings to get Tibetan woollen cloth, salt, ornaments, swords, and other tools and implements from the plains. Tita (a medicinal, poisonous herb) has always been an important item in the Mishimi trade with the plains. Formerly the Monpas had close trade connexions with Tibet. They used to get from there wool, salt, and ornaments in exchange for maize, millet, and rice. They used to supply large quantities of rice to Tibet. Tawang then was very important in the trade between Assam and Tibet. The Monpas now go to Kalimpong to buy the things they used to get from Tibet in the past. From Bhutan, they bring mainly cloth. The tribes

in between like the Apa Tanis have always traded with their respective neighbours in the south and the north. Formerly the Adis also had indirect trade relations with Tibet, through the Monpas, their northern neighbours, from whom they used to get Tibetan woollen cloth, salt, swords, ornaments, etc. The Apa Tanis exchange rice for mithuns from the Dashtas. They also buy buffaloes and cows from the people of the plains. They sacrifice them occasionally to their gods. They also eat the meat of these cattle on festive occasions.

To venture out of the hills on a trading mission has always been a dangerous enterprise. There was danger in crossing the Brahmaputra and its tributaries; there was the risk of being buried alive in a landslide; there was the dread possibility of an earth tremor; and there was the near certainty of being shot with poisoned arrows by hostile tribes while in transit through their domains. In former times particularly, the journeys to Assam and to Tibet to barter hides, musk, and herbs for salt, cotton yarn or wool, metal, and similar other necessities of life were so perilous that even now some tribesmen use the phrase "going to fetch salt" as a euphemism for death.

Except the Dashtas and the Mishimis, every tribe has its own village council of elders for settling all disputes according to its own usages. (Now the Administration recognizes an influential man of a Dashta/Mishimi village with the present of a red coat as a token of authority and distinction.) Besides the Kebang (Village Council), the Adis have two other higher-level councils, known as Bango and Bogum Bokam. The Bango is the inter-village council, whereas the Bogum Bokam is the all-tribe-level council. The Sherdukpas hold a council of their village headmen every two or three years under the presidentship of the Thik Akhao (Village Headman) to settle all disputes. The jurisdiction of the council does not generally extend beyond the tribe concerned. In the identification of culprits the councils take recourse to oaths and ordeals. Criminal cases are now dealt with by the District and Subdivisional Magistrates them-

selves, but in giving their judgements these officers do not fail to take into account the customs of the tribes concerned. There is much diversity in the religious beliefs and practices of the tribes. The Khamptis follow the Bunnese form of Buddhism. The Singphos have been influenced by Khampti Buddhism. The Moopas follow the Tibetan form of Buddhism, popularly known as Lamaism. While the Monpas of Siang are adherents of the Nyingmapa, Red Hat Order, one form of Lamaism, those of Kameng are adherents of the Gelukpa, Yellow Hat Order, another form of Lamaism. Both the Nyingmapa and Gelukpa orders have adherents among the Sherdukpas. There is an element of animism in the Buddhism of the Khamptis and the Singphos as well as of the Monpas and the Sherdukpas. The Adi tribes of upper Siang have been influenced by the Buddhist culture of the neighbouring Khambas and Monpas. The Akas and the Buguns of Kameng have been influenced by the Buddhist culture of the neighbouring Sherdukpas and the Monpas. The Mishmis, the Adis, the Miris, the Daflas, and the Apas are animists. The Mikirs of Subansiri follow Hinduism of the Mikirs of the Mikir Hills of Assam.

### BIHUTAN

The people of Bhutan are quite like the people of Eastern Tibet and have many common features like a robust build, fair complexion, a prominent chin, a sharp nose, and slit eyes with epicanthic fold. Ethnically the people of Eastern Bhutan are different from those of Western Bhutan; the Pele La range is the dividing line. The Bhutanese who live in the area east of the Pele La range have more similarities with the people of Western NEFA. Along the greater part of the northern border live the Tibetans.

According to Bhutanese tradition, the first Bhutanese descended from heaven. According to Sanskrit tradition, it was the Kochi tribe that originally inhabited Bhutan. The people of Tibetan origin arrived in Bhutan in the time of King Ralpachan (c. 816-36) of Tibet. The Nepalese of

Southern Bhutan and the Lepchas of Western Bhutan came later. The origin and history of minor tribes like the Brokpas spreading all over the country; the Dakpas and the Sherchokpas of North-Eastern Bhutan along the border between Bhutan and Tawang, and the Doyas of South-Western Bhutan in the Dorokha Subdivision of Samchi are obscure. According to legend, the Doya kings ruled there for several hundred years. There are ruins of the Doya royal court at Denchnka, north-east of Dorokha, across the Torsa River.

Agriculture is the main occupation of those who live in Southern Bhutan. They use the plough, which is drawn by the dzo, in tilling the soil. Those who live in Northern Bhutan are both agriculturists and pastoralists. They especially raise yaks, which play an important role in their economy.

Formerly there was a flourishing trade between India and Tibet through Bhutan, with the Bhutanese as carrying agents. The three trade routes through Bhutan, which connected Assam and Bengal on the one hand and Tibet on the other, were (1) the Manas River Valley, (2) the Kariapara Duar, and (3) the Paro Valley. From Bengal and Cooch Bihar the Bhutanese used to collect dyes, endi or cri (coarse silk made of the produce of silk-worms fed on the castor-oil plant, called cri locally) cloth, supari (arecanut), tea, and tobacco, and exchange them with the Tibetans for wool, salt, and musk. Though Bhutan has plenty of goats and sheep, the Bhutanese buy their requirements of woollen cloth from Bengal.

Every Bhutanese village has its own organization, headed by the Gup (Village Headman), for settling all disputes. The Gup refers unsettled disputes to the authorities of the dzong (district). The Bhutanese do not usually make any complaints for assaults and adultery. If a man fails to prove his claim, he is fined.

The Tibetan form of Buddhism is the State religion of Bhutan. Formerly only the lamas held high official posts; even now they constitute the privileged class. A small section

of people still practise the pre-Buddhist folk religion, Bon. They sacrifice animals to avoid the evil influence of spirits. The Doyas are animists. They offer monkey flesh to the spirits in order to propitiate them.

### SIKKIM

The people of Sikkim consist of three different ethnic groups, namely the Lepchas, the Bhotiyas, and the Nepalese. The Lepchas are the original inhabitants, while the Bhotiyas and the Nepalese are immigrants. The hills, mountains, and streams have Lepcha names, which indicates that the Lepchas are the original inhabitants of the country. The Lepchas have a unique knowledge of Sikkimese jungles, wild life, and vegetation, especially herbs. According to folklore, the original homeland of the Lepchas was in the neighbourhood of Kangchenjunga; and they sprang from a monkey father and a human mother. Not much is known about their history prior to their conversion to Buddhism and the enthronement of Phuntsok Namgyal as the first ruler of Sikkim in 1642. With Buddhism there came several waves of Tibetan and Bhutanese immigrants. The religion of the Bhotiyas and the Lepchas being the same, hardly anything stood in the way of the two tribes intermingling. The Bhotiyas influenced the Lepchas deeply with their superior culture. The Bhutanese made incursions into Sikkim in the eighteenth century, and this led to their intermingling with the Lepchas. The Bhotiyas of the Lachen and Lachung valleys in Northern Sikkim, like the people of the Chumbi Valley of Tibet, claim descent from the early immigrants from Ha in Western Bhutan.

Most of the present Bhotiyas of Sikkim are thus descendants of Tibetan and Bhutanese immigrants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The immigrants played an important role in establishing the kingdom of Sikkim and in introducing cultural and political changes there. The Chogyal of Sikkim is of the Bhotiya tribe.

The bulk of the Nepalese in South-Western Sikkim



mainly consists of the Lambu and Rai immigrants from Eastern Nepal. The Nepalese, who started migrating to Sikkim in the second quarter of the nineteenth century in search of agricultural land, influenced the Lepchas with their better agricultural methods, especially with their superior method of rice cultivation. Migration from Nepal was so large that the Lepchas ultimately became a minority in their own native land. Since 1880, the Nepalese have been prohibited by the Sikkim State Government to settle in Central and Northern Sikkim.

The terms *Bhotiya* and *Lepcha* are used only by the non-Tibetan-speaking peoples of India and Nepal. The Lepchas call themselves *Rongs*.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the Sikkimese. The Sikkimese of the north are both agriculturists and pastoralists. The Lepchas were originally food-gatherers: forest produce like herbs and roots were the main items of their food. Bows, arrows, and knives were their only weapons for hunting, the bamboo scabbard always dangled on one side. They also caught fish. They practised shifting cultivation until the late nineteenth century.

The Sikkimese had trade relations with the Tibetans. The old trade route from Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim, to Phari in Tibet was via the Nathu La. The other trade routes were via the Jelep La in the north-east and via the La Chen in the north. Important among the items imported from Tibet were wool and salt. The articles of export to Tibet were cardamom, rice, and spices. Trade was generally by barter.

Every Sikkimese village has its own organization, headed by the village headman, to maintain law and order and to settle disputes. The punishment varies according to the nature and gravity of the offence. Violence is rare among the Lepchas. There is no word for murder or killing in the Lepcha language. If the village council fails to settle a dispute or to detect a crime even with the help of oaths and ordeals, it refers it to the higher judicial authorities of the country.

The Nyingmapa-Kargyupa form of Lamaism is the State religion of Sikkim. The Sikkimese are animists as well as Buddhists. The Buddhist Sikkimese annually worship the god of Mount Kangchenjunga in their monasteries. They perform a war-dance in honour of this god and invoke his blessings for the welfare of the people and the country. Participants in the war-dance observe taboo regarding food etc. The Lepchas, who still practise the pre-Buddhist folk religion Bon, believe in spirits and sacrifice animals to avert their evil influence. They have their own exorcists and priests, the Bontings and the Muns. The difference between a Bonting and a Mun is that only a man can become a Bonting, whereas even a woman can become a Mun. The Bontings do not have any ceremonial dress: any dress is all right. They are the custodians of Lepcha history.

## NEPAL

Nepal is the homeland of several ethnic groups. According to Nepalese history and tradition, the Kirats are the earliest inhabitants of the country. References in the Mahabharata connect them with the central region of Nepal and the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam. The Limbus and the Rais of Eastern Nepal, collectively known as the Kirati people, now represent the ancient Kirat race in Nepal. The Kirats ruled Nepal for centuries. Many inscriptions of the Lichchavis have Kirati place names in the Bagmati Valley and thus testify to their early settlement there. Driven away from Central Nepal, they settled in the eastern parts of the country. When the Gorkhas conquered Eastern Nepal in 1772, they conferred the title Rai (Nobleman) on the chiefs serving in the Sena kingdom of Vijayapur in the eastern Tarai, and the title Suba (Chief) on the chiefs of the Limbus. Later, the Government of Nepal started conferring the title Suba on its high-ranking officials. The Lepchas (in the Dhankuta and Ilam areas) of Eastern Nepal have lived there for as long as the Limbus. The Bajhangi and Dotiyal ethnic groups of Western Nepal, who closely resemble the

ethnic groups of Kumaun, migrated there from the plains via Kumaun. Minor tribes like the Yolmos fall within the pale of the neighbouring major tribes. The Chepangs, a nomadic forest tribe living near the confluence of the Kali, Seti, and Trisuli rivers, are an indigenous group.

The Tharus, who live in the swampy and malarious Tarai strip between India and Nepal, claim to have come from Rajasthan. Perhaps they are the original inhabitants of the Tarai. They have Mongoloid features. The Limbus, who live in Limbu, the Limbu country east of the Arun River (there are no Limbus west of the Arun), consist of a number of clans. The Rais also consist of a number of clans. The Tamangs and their cognates inhabit Eastern Nepal between the southern and northern groups. The Newars of the Bagmati Valley, also early settlers, claim that they first came to Nepal as soldiers under Nanyadeva from South India towards the end of the eleventh century.

The Magars, who live in Magrat, the Magar country west of the Kali Gandaki River, have fewer and less pronounced Mongoloid features. The Gurungs, who live north of the Magars, claim to have come from Tibet. They have marked Mongoloid features. Colonies of the Gurungs and the Magars are found all over Eastern Nepal. There are several clans of the Gurungs and the Magars, but the Ghailes can be both Gurungs and Magars. Owing to the geographical position of Magrat, the Magars have had closer and longer contacts than the Gurungs with the Rajputs who came and settled down in Nepal in the wake of the Muslim invasions of North India. The ethnic groups of Nepal's northern borderland are strongly Mongoloid and look almost like the Tibetans. The Sherpas, who live in the uplands of Eastern Nepal, are Tibetan immigrants.

The term Sherpa (Easterner) is Tibetan. The non-Tibetan-speaking Nepalese in the country refer to the Tamangs, the Thakalis, the Sherpas, and other northern groups as Bhotes. The Thakalis call themselves Tamang. Of course, they have no connexion with the Tamangs of Central and Eastern Nepal.

Agriculture, supplemented by animal husbandry, is the main occupation of the people of Nepal. For tilling the soil the Nepalese use an iron-tipped wooden plough drawn by a pair of oxen. The Tharus raise large herds of cattle for their milk. They also raise bullocks. They preserve dried fish for the rainy season. They also hunt wild elephants. The Magars are mainly agricultural, and the Gurungs mainly pastoral. The Gurungs, the Sherpas, and the Thakalis raise goats, sheep, and yaks, which are also their beasts of burden. They supplement their income by trade. The sale of seed potatoes is one of the main sources of the income of the Sherpas.

Nepal has had trade relations with India and Tibet since long and has always acted as a carrying agent between India and Tibet. The principal imports from Tibet are wool, salt, and borax; and the principal exports are household goods, grains, and dyes. The Newars and the Thakalis have always played a great part in the trade between Nepal and Tibet. The Newars have their business houses in Calcutta, Kalimpong, and Lhasa.

Every Nepalese village has its own organization, headed by the village headman, for the maintenance of law and order and the settlement of all disputes. The village headman also collects land revenue and deposits it in the nearest Mal Adda (Revenue Office). The post of headman is hereditary. The Sherpas, however, have a different type of organization where a number of elected men maintain law and order in the village. The Pambu (Village Headman) mainly functions as an agent in the collection of land revenue. Succession to this office depends partly on heredity and partly on personal ability. If a gram panchayat (Village Council) fails to settle a dispute or matter, the people go to the nearest Amni Adda (Judicial Office).

Hinduism is now the State religion of Nepal. Buddhism, which had a stronghold in the Bagmati Valley prior to the twelfth century, is so deeply mixed up with Hinduism that it is difficult to draw a line between the two religions. The Newars follow both Buddhism and Hinduism. The

Tamangs, who live in the lower valleys, are Hindus; those who live in the higher valleys are Buddhists. The Sherpas are Buddhists, and follow the Nyingma form of Lamaism. The Tharus, who have completely forgotten their tribal culture, observe all Hindu ceremonies, feasts, and festivals. In 1948, an order of the Government of Nepal recognized the Tharus as high-caste Hindus. The Magars are mainly Hindus. The Gurungs are mainly Buddhists, and follow the Nyingma form of Lamaism. Such of them as are not Buddhists follow Hinduism. The old folk religion, animism, still prevails among certain groups. Their folklore contains their early beliefs and superstitions. The Thakalis, who, until about two generations ago, were firmly rooted in the Buddhist tradition of the Nyingma form of Lamaism, are now adopting Hinduism to achieve better social status. They are also reverting to the pre-Buddhist folk religion Bon, which has survived side by side with Buddhism.

### UTTARAKHAND

The people of Uttarakhand, commonly known as Khasas, are mentioned in the *Mahabharata*. There are two major strains which are believed to have contributed to the present Khasa complex, descendants of the original Khasas and the immigrant Rajputs and the Khasas whom they married. The Doms, perhaps the earliest indigenous group, represent the first, whereas the Rajputs represent the second. The Khasas, originally a nomadic tribe of Central Asia, entered India through the north-west in ancient times and settled on the northern fringes of Kashmir. Now they are spread from Kashmir to Nepal. The Kanets of the Kumaun-Kangra hills are allied with the Khasas ethnically and linguistically.

The Bhotiyas of Uttarakhand claim descent from those Rajputs who came from Kumaun or Garhwal and settled in the upper valleys. The Jadhs of the Bhagirathi Valley claim to have come from Kinnaur in the west. The small group of the Khampas living along with the Jadhs also came from the west. The Shokas living on the southern fringe of the

eastern Bhotiya country claim connexion with the Joharis, from whom they broke away some time ago. The Bhotiyas of the Pithoragarh District are known as Byansis, Chaudansis, and Darmawals after the names of the subdivisions they live in. Those of the Chamoli and Uttarakashi districts are known as Joharis, Tolehas, Marchas, and Jadhs. The Bhotiyas of Pithoragarh in Kumaun are collectively known as the eastern Bhotiyas, and those of Chamoli and Uttarakashi in Garhwal as the western Bhotiyas.

Since early times, the highlanders of Kumaun had migrated along with their livestock to the Bhabar and Tarai lands in the cold months every year. The rajas of Kumaun, who also used to migrate there and encourage the people to cultivate the lands there, always defended the Bhabar and Tarai lands against invasions from the south. Bajpur and Rudrapur, named after the rajas of Kumaun, were military centres. The practice of migration of the people from the Kumaun hills to the lowlands stopped after 1947 without any alternative arrangement.

The Bhotiyas have always migrated along with their livestock to the central parts of Kumaun and Garhwal in the cold months. They have their own winter villages there. There they make their fine woollen gudmas (carpets), pankhis (wrappers), and thulmas (blankets).

Agriculture, supplemented by animal husbandry, is the main occupation of the people of Uttarakhand. The Chaudansi Bhotiyas, who get two crops a year (owing to their low geographical location), have always been agriculturists. Other clans of the Bhotiyas are not agriculture-minded. Some of the former Bhotiya traders, however, have now taken to agriculture, although sheep-raising is still the occupation they prefer.

All along in history, till the stoppage of trade with Western Tibet in 1962, the Bhotiyas occupied a key position in the commercial intercourse between North India and Western Tibet. Trade played a vital role in their economy. There were specified trade marts in Western Tibet for the different Bhotiya groups. The principal exports used to be grains,

household goods, cotton, *gur* (jaggery), sugar, and hardware. These used to be exchanged for wool, salt, ponies, *borāx*, and yak-tails. The Bhotiyas used to move upwards to Western Tibet with their merchandise during the summer months, and downwards to the lowlands during the winter months. Their trade relations with their neighbours in the plains are still flourishing; Tanakpur, Haldwani, and Ramnagar are the most important among the markets where they buy and sell. Consequently, the people of Garhwal and Kumaun always refer to the Bhotiya traders as *mit* (from the Sanskrit *mitra*, friend).

Formerly, every village in Uttarakhand had its own organization. The *Padhan* (from the Sanskrit *Pradhan*, Village Headman) maintained law and order in the village. He collected land revenue as well. Disputes, especially those which related to land, are mostly settled in the *Gram Panchayat* (Village Council). Now, however, with the introduction of the Panchayat Raj system in the 1950s, the people can go in appeal before a *Nyaya Panchayat* (Council of Justice), which has jurisdiction over a *patti* (a territorial unit comprising anywhere from ten to thirty villages), or to the district court. The post of *Padhan* used to be hereditary, but is now elective.

The Bhotiya religion is a mixture of animism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The eastern Bhotiyas still follow their traditional folk religion based on belief in, and worship of, spirits. They offer sacrifice to ward off the evil influence of spirits. The present trend among the western Bhotiyas, who are partly Hinduized, is to become Hindu to achieve better social status.

### KINNAUR, LAHUL, AND SPITI

The Khasa people of the Western Himalaya are the same as the Khasa people of Garhwal, Kumaun, and Nepal. In Himachal Pradesh, they are generally known as Kanets or Rajputs. The Kanets or Rajputs of Southern Kinnaur, the dominant group, are immigrants from the plains. The

Khampas of the Bhaba Valley and the Betas of the Hangrang Valley migrated from Tibet long ago. The Chamangs, including the Domangs, are perhaps the indigenous people.

The people of Spiti, locally known as the Spitipas, are akin to the people of Tibet but are usually short-statured. They are perhaps the descendants of those who immigrated from Tibet in the eighth and ninth centuries. There is also evidence of the migration of people from Zangskar and other parts of Ladakh to Spiti.

The people of Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti used to migrate along with their livestock to Sirmur, Mandi, and Suket, as well as to the upper parts of Kulu, in the cold months every year. The people of Lahul used to take with them their cattle as well, especially their flocks of sheep and goats, to the hills of Kangra. This practice is now almost dead. Actually, with the change in the times, the people of Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti have turned sedentary in nature.

Agriculture, supplemented by animal husbandry and trade, is the main occupation of the people of Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti. While the southern Kinnauras are mainly agriculturists, the northern Kinnauras are mainly pastoralists and traders. For tilling the soil the Kinnauras use a crude type of plough drawn by animal power. The Spitipas raise one crop a year. The pastoral Kinnauras raise goats, sheep, and yaks. The goats and sheep supply them with abundant wool. They also serve as beasts of burden. From the milk of yaks, the Kinnauras prepare many milk products which supplement their food. The people of Lahul and Spiti are mainly pastoralists and traders. They raise goats, sheep, and yaks, chiefly to provide themselves with food and clothing. They exchange their goats, sheep, and wool for household goods, grains, and cotton textiles. They transport grains to Ladakh.

Formerly the people of Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti used to visit Western Tibet along with their flocks of goats and sheep during the summer months to get salt, wool, borax, and yak-tails in exchange for grains, sugar, and cotton textiles. They used to come down even to Amritsar during the winter months to sell Tibetan goods and buy whatever they felt



had a market back in Tibet and elsewhere.

All disputes in a Kinnaur village used to be settled either by the elders of the village or by the officers appointed for the purpose by the Maharaja of Bushahr, and ultimately by the Maharaja himself. Lahul and Spiti had their own village organizations in the form of village councils for the maintenance of law and order. Formerly there were two kinds of headmen in every village of Spiti, Nono and Gadpon. The Nono was responsible for the collection of land tax. The Gadpon held charge of labour. The office of Nono is hereditary. A council of five village elders, two elected and three nominated, advise the Nono.

Now, with the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system, each Gram Panchayat settles all disputes over land, etc. as well as development activities. If it cannot settle any dispute, it forwards it to the Nyaya Panchayat for disposal. The Nyaya Panchayat is also the court of appeal. The post of Pradhan, which was formerly hereditary, is now elective. However, the proliferation of administrative personnel in recent times has heavily eroded the functions of the village councils.

The southern Kinnauras are Hindus. The entire land is regarded as belonging to the deotas (deities). The northern Kinnauras follow the Tibetan form of Buddhism. The people of Lahul and Spiti also follow the Tibetan form of Buddhism. The old folk religion based on belief in, and worship of, spirits still exists in Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti.

## LADAKH

Ethnically Ladakh consists of different groups. According to the folklore of the Dards, the whole of Ladakh was originally inhabited by the Dards. The skulls unearthed during excavations of ancient sites show that Ladakh was inhabited in the distant past by people of the Dardic stock and not by people of the Mongoloid stock. The Mons migrated to Ladakh from the west in early times. Later, there were repeated invasions from Tibet, Baltistan, and

Central Asia. Then came the Mughals, who held sway for a long period. Leh became the entrepot of Central Asian trade and the meeting-place of caravans. The events of history and the contacts built up for the purposes of trade brought about racial admixture in Ladakh.

The Ladakhis of the Indus Valley around Leh depend mainly on agriculture. For tilling the soil they use a heavy wooden plough drawn by dzos. The iron share is flat and broad, suitable for rocky soil. The Ladakhis manure their fields with luth (animal and human refuse). The Changpa nomads are mainly pastoralists. The Baltis and the Dards depend both on agriculture and on animal husbandry.

Formerly trade played an important role in the life of the Ladakhis both economically and culturally. Prior to 1949-50, the Ladakhis enjoyed almost a monopoly in the carrying trade with Central Asia and Tibet. The main items of export were wool, pashmina, felt, and borax to the Punjab and Kashmir, grains and dry fruit to Tibet, and sugar and spices to Sinkiang. The main items of import were wool, salt, tea, and borax from Tibet and sugar, hardware, cotton textiles, and household goods from the Punjab and Kashmir.

Every Ladakhi village has its own organization, headed by an officer designated Gopa (Village Headman) who maintains law and order in the village. The office of Gopa used to be hereditary in the past, but is now elective. If the Gopa is not able to settle a dispute, the people go to the higher judicial authorities.

Buddhism is the prevailing religion of Ladakh. Formerly the lamas never involved themselves in political affairs. Kushok Bakula, who was formerly Minister for Ladakh Affairs in the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, is now a member of the Lok Sabha for Ladakh. The Brokpa tribesmen of Western Ladakh have been deeply influenced by the Buddhism of the neighbouring Ladakhis.

The people of the Himalaya have distinct economic, political, and social systems and practices. Their occupations,

economic relations, ethnic characteristics, and religious beliefs are akin to those of the people who live in the areas both north and south of them. The process of migration in the Himalaya is still going on. The Nepalese began migrating to Sikkim and to the neighbouring Darjeeling District about a hundred years ago. Indeed they constitute about 70 per cent of the population of Sikkim today. Recently they have begun to migrate to Bhutan. Since the flight of the Dalai Lama in 1959, there has been a steady migration of Tibetans (from all parts of Tibet) in large numbers to the Himalaya border countries south of Tibet. Agriculture is the principal occupation of the people in the lower parts of the Himalaya borderland. Animal husbandry is the principal occupation of the people in the upper parts. The agricultural groups in the lower parts supplement their income by subsidiary occupations such as fishing and hunting. The pastoral groups in the upper parts do so by trade. Land is, of course, most important to the agricultural groups, but they find cattle also a useful source of income. Livestock like sheep, goats, yaks, and ponies, which provide milk, meat, hide, wool, and transportation, play the most important role in their economy. Land is not all important to the pastoral groups. Among the agrarians, the extent of cultivable land owned by a man determines his socio-economic status; among the pastoral-traders, it is the number of livestock. The concept of property and its value varies from people to people according to their occupations.

Most of the southern groups are Hindus. Hence the influence of Indian culture is more pronounced there. Most of the northern groups are Buddhists. Hence the influence of Tibetan culture is more pronounced there. However, a dynamic synthesis of diverse influences, ranging from pre-Buddhist and pre-Hindu Bon culture to the cultures of India and Tibet, characterizes the contemporary Himalayan society.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE HISTORY

THE HIMALAYA border countries have always been an inseparable part of India geographically and culturally. They have been inseparable from India historically and politically as well. Assam, Nepal, Kumaun, Garhwal, Kulu, and Kashmir, for instance, find frequent mention in the epigraphs and literature of the early dynasties of North India (320 B.C.—A.D. 550). After the death of Harshavardhana (c. A.D. 605-47) of Kannauj in 647, however, a greater part of the upper Himalaya borderland from Assam to Kashmir came under the influence of Tibet. In his struggle to establish his supremacy in Central Asia, Songtsen Gampo (r. 630-49) of Tibet not only invaded China (in 635) but also a good many other neighbouring countries and made Tibet the supreme Power in Central Asia for nearly two centuries. During this ascendancy of Tibet in Central Asia Buddhist scholar-monks from India went to Tibet and laid the foundations of Buddhism in Tibet. Also, during this time, Tibetan influence set its unmistakable stamp on the lands in the entire upper Himalaya, and brought about a transformation of their cultural and ethnic structure.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Muslims invaded North India and changed the political set-up there. All major States yielded under their pressure and collapsed one after another. Muhammad bin Bakhtiar Khalji, one of the commanders of the first Muslim dynasty founded by Qutubuddin Aibak in 1206, even attempted an invasion of

the Eastern Himalaya, especially Bhutan. Muhammad Shah Tughlak (r. 1325-51) made an invasion of the Western Himalaya, but he could not advance beyond the foothills, and the Himalaya maintained its frontier character. The Rajput princes, who migrated to the Central Himalaya after being deprived of their power in the plains, founded there a large number of independent principalities like the principality of Gorkha in the central-western hills of Nepal, fifty miles west of Kathmandu. Inevitably mediaeval Hindu culture and ethnic traditions swept the entire lower Central Himalaya, absorbing or transforming the cultural and ethnic complexion of the area. Most of the newly founded principalities in the Central Himalaya recognized the supremacy of the Sultans and Emperors of Delhi. The Mughals sought to freeze the Himalaya frontier, and established a feudatory relationship with most of the principalities in the Himalaya from Assam to Kashmir. Akbar (r. 1556-1605) brought Kashmir under his control in 1586. Jahangir (r. 1605-27) and Shah Jahan (r. 1627-58) tried to extend the frontier of the Mughal Empire up to Baltistan and Ladakh in order not to allow any invasion of Kashmir from Central Asia. Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) authorized the subadars (Governors) of the Province of Bengal to invade Assam repeatedly. One of these subadars, Mir Jumla, marched on Assam early in 1662. The peace treaty concluded in 1663 gave all territory west of the Bharali River to the Mughals. Ladakh was subdued and turned into a vassal State in 1665.

The apogee of Mughal power in India coincided with the re-emergence of Tibet under the spiritual and temporal leadership of Dalai Lama V (Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso, 1617-82) in 1642. Ladakh, which feared that it might be absorbed by Tibet, thought it expedient to forge closer links with Mughal power through the Mughal governor of Kashmir with a view to deterring Tibet, during the Ladakh-Tibet War of 1681-83. Tibet, however, had better success in Bhutan, where there was no Mughal power to deter it. It successfully intervened in the affairs of Bhutan in 1728-30, and

established its influence there.

The British sought to establish commercial relations in the countries beyond the Himalaya as soon as their conquests in India touched the foothills of the Eastern Himalaya in 1767. They did not, however, achieve much success till the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-15. This war was their first major breakthrough in the Himalaya, for it made the frontier of the British territories in Kumaun and Garhwal contiguous to that of Tibet. They opened trade channels through the Himalaya progressively for increased intercourse between India and the countries beyond the Himalaya. The special treaty relations which they established with the Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir between 1816 and 1870 enabled them to consolidate their position in the Western Himalaya and extend their influence to Central Asia. The need to check the growth of Russian influence in Central Asia and the isolationist nature of the policies of Tibet largely moulded British policy in the Himalaya. The British fought Tibet in 1888-89 (on Sikkimese territory) and 1903-04, and secured a buffer position for Tibet between India and Central Asia by three consecutive agreements with Tibet, China, and Russia on 7 September 1904, 27 April 1906, and 31 August 1907 respectively.

This situation in the Himalaya continued until the British withdrawal from India on 15 August 1947. Independent India entered into fresh treaty relations with Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal. It formulated a frontier policy based on both political and strategical considerations and consistent with the needs of planning and development in the Himalaya. Tibet came under the control of the People's Republic of China in the spring of 1951. This lent an element of urgency to India's need to understand the problems of its Himalaya frontier. China's aggressive activities along the entire Himalaya border after the summer of 1959 and its invasion of India in the winter of 1962 had a far-reaching impact on the course of history in the Himalaya.

## NEFA

What is now called NEFA has been a part of Assam from time immemorial. According to tradition, ancient Assam touched the confines of South-West China. From the account by Yuan Chwang of his travels in the area we know that the northern limits of Kamarupa (ancient Assam, including Bhutan) extended much beyond the frontiers of modern Assam. The political instability in north-eastern India which followed the death of Bhaskaravarman (r. 605-50) of Kamampa in 650 reduced ancient Assam to its present size.

With the decline of the Pala dynasty (770-942), Kamarupa suffered several invasions from the east and from the west. Sukapha (r. 1228-68) of the Ta'i kingdom of Mogaung/Mong Mao in North Burma conquered Upper Kamarupa in 1228 and thus became the founder and first ruler of the Ahom dynasty in Assam. It took his successors several centuries to establish their power over all the tribes of Eastern India like the Nagas, the Kacharis, and the Chutiyas. The relations of the Ahoms with these tribes started only after the conquest of the Chutiya country around Sadiya in the plains below in 1523-24 during the reign of Raja Suhungmung (r. 1497-1539). An officer, known as the Sadiya Khowa Gohain (Administrator of Sadiya), looked after the relations between the Ahoms and the tribes around Sadiya. The Darrang Raja, first installed during the Ahom-Mughal conflict in 1616, was appointed warden of the Ahom marches with Bhutan. He always took counsel from the Bar Phukan, Governor of Gauhati, in all important matters connected with the relations of the Ahoms with Bhutan.

The Ahoms, however, did not always have an easy time. The tribes strongly resented the loss of their traditional rights and privileges in the foothill villages and made frequent raids. The Ahoms found it no easy matter to punish them. Though equipped only with primitive arms like bows and arrows the tribes had the advantage of the wildness of the terrain of their hills. Often the Ahoms ignored these

disadvantages and marched on the northern hills. In spite of their superior forces and weapons they had to suffer heavy casualties and even defeat. They, therefore, developed a policy of conciliation by assigning to each tribe a certain number of paiks (tax-paying settlements) and giving it the right to realize from them a certain quantity of cereals, cloth, iron, and salt, called *posa*, as well as manual labour. They confirmed the rights of the Mishmis over the hills near the Dibang River and accepted in return a tribute including *tita* (a medicinal, poisonous herb) by an official deed of grant in the time of Raja Suhungmung. The Abor tribes, which did not receive any *posa*, received regular presents from the gold washers employed by the Ahom Government to extract gold from the riverine sands of the Abor hills. Peace in the foothill region was also ensured by specifying the passes by which the tribesmen could come down to the plains, and by erecting embankments along the foothills. The Ahoms also took armed action against refractory tribes whenever circumstances permitted. They received tribute from all frontier hill tribes as a token of their acknowledgment of Ahom sovereignty. The Bhotiya tribes, especially the Monpas, owed no allegiance to the Ahoms. The Monpas, with their stronghold at Tawang, were under the control of the abbot of the Tawang Monastery. The Sherdukpas, the people who lived in the hills between the two, were dependent on both the Ahoms and the Monpas.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, there was a civil strife among the feudal chiefs. The Matakas, who were followers of the Moanaria Sect of Hinduism and who had been persecuted since 1750, also rose in rebellion. Taking advantage of the consequent instability in the area, the Burmese pressed westward under their king, Bodawpaya (r. 1781-1819), and conquered Assam. The British intervened, and this led to the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-26 and the eradication of all Burmese influence from Assam. By the peace treaty signed at Yandabo on 24 February 1826, the British annexed the whole of Lower Assam and parts of Upper Assam (like the strategic Matak and Sadiya areas



occupied by the Matak, the Khamptis, and the Singphos). They appointed a Political Agent to control the affairs of Upper Assam, and especially those of the tribes inhabiting the Sadiya frontier.

The British felt greatly handicapped in their dealings with the Khamptis and the Singphos in the east and with the Bhutanese in the west owing to the inadequacy of their knowledge of the northern tribes and of the topography of the region. It became clear to them that any military action that they might take against them would be not only futile but also disastrous. They, therefore, refrained from extending their jurisdiction over all the tribes around the northern districts of Assam, and maintained the status quo as regards the claims of the tribes and their own political relations with them. However, to promote close relations with the tribes, they developed a few trade marts along the administrative frontier at Sadiya, Mazbat (the present Charduar), and Udalgiri (Kariapara Duar). The free entry thus afforded to the tribesmen into the plains led to complications. For instance, the Dafia tribe claimed all the Miri posa-paying settlements that had sprung up in the adjacent British territory as a result of the security and stability ensured there.

Local British officers strongly advocated the permanent occupation and control of all frontier hill tracts. But both the Government of Bengal and the Government of India ruled it out. In their view, the problem before them was not so much one of effecting the permanent occupation of those frontier tracts as one of determining how and where the British advance was to be stopped. They preferred the path of conciliation and persuasion to that of coercion in their effort to bring the northern hill tribes within the framework of the British administration in Assam. The Government of Bengal was able to persuade the Dafia, Aka, and Bhotiya tribes (including the Monpas of the Dirang and Tawang tracts) in 1844 and 1853 to surrender their right to deal directly with the paiks and realize the posa due to them and made them accept lump-sum payments from the Government in lieu of posa. Further it promised annual subsi-

dies in kind to the Abor tribes by concluding three agreements with them in 1862, 1863, and 1866. It also encouraged the tribesmen to join the military and the police. It resorted to economic or military blockades only when absolutely necessary. John Lawrence, Governor-General of India (1864-69), warned in 1865 that if at any time it was found necessary to deploy troops in the hill areas beyond the administrative border, the troops would stay there only so long as they would be necessary for the attainment of the objective in view at the time and no longer.

There were many hostile confrontations between the Government and the tribes till 1873. In 1873, for the first time, the Government imposed a restriction on the free intercourse between the people of the hills and those of the plains by an administrative measure, the Eastern Frontier of Bengal Regulation I of 1873. An administrative line, called the Inner Line, marked off the northern areas from those under the effective control of the Government, and regulated the intercourse between the people of the hills and those of the plains for purposes of trade, collection of forest produce, and so on. Something had to be done to ensure the security of the British officers deputed to carry out explorations and surveys in the northern frontier tracts. In view of the hostile attitude of the Abor tribesmen towards the Survey parties in 1876-77, their interference with the trade route to Sadiya, and the Mishmi (Bebejiya/Chulikata) raids on the settlements in the plains in 1878-79, the Government established three advance outposts—at Nizamghat, Bomjur, and Bhishemnagar—in the Abor and Mishmi hills. It also prohibited the Padam tribesmen from coming down to Sadiya with arms on their persons.

The Assam administration created the post of a special officer in 1882 to deal with the tribes bordering Sadiya. This special officer, designated Assistant Political Officer, was given several important assignments, such as the locating of frontier outposts, the provision of supplies to these outposts, the superintendence of the arrangements for patrolling between them, and the regulation of the political relations

of the Government with the Abors and the Mishmis.

In 1906-07, the Assam administration advocated a forward policy in the region of the north-east frontier. The Government of India, however, permitted the Assistant Political Officer only to tour the frontier areas in the Abor and Mishmi hills. In 1911, the Government was faced with two major issues on this frontier: (1) the murder of Noel Williamson, Assistant Political Officer, and the slaughter of his party at Komsing by the Mnyong tribesmen; and (2) sporadic Chinese incursions at some points on the northern border and the threat posed by them. It, therefore, adopted the forward policy which it had rejected in 1906-07.

The murder of Williamson reflected the persistently defiant attitude of the Abor tribes towards British authority. The Chinese had been sighted well within the borders of the Abor and Mishmi areas with Tibet. Although there was no doubt in the mind of the administration about the northern limits of the frontier hills, which also constituted the extent of the territory of India in that direction, lack of proper exploration and survey in the remote northern parts of those hills had so far prevented the Government from defining India's external frontier there in exact and explicit terms. In July 1909, the Political Officer in Sikkim cautioned the Government of India regarding the dangers inherent in leaving this frontier undefined and unascertained, and said that Tibet (or China from behind Tibet) might advance a claim to the whole or part of the areas beyond the Inner Line. The Government dispatched a strong punitive force called the Abor Expedition in 1911 both to punish the persons involved in Williamson's murder and to utilize the opportunity to survey, explore, and map as much of the north-eastern frontier country as possible.

Seized of the dangers of an undefined, unsurveyed frontier, the Government took up an intensive programme of survey and exploration in the Assam borderland with Tibet in 1911-13. Towards the close of this programme in 1913, Captains F. M. Bailey of the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India and H. T. Morshead of

the Survey of India crossed the Dibang watershed into the Po region in the south-eastern part of Tibet and mapped the entire southern catchment area of the Tsangpo River up to Tsona Dzong of Tibet near the trijunction of Assam, Bhutan, and Tibet. The anxiety of the Government of India to mark off the areas under its jurisdiction from those under the jurisdiction of Tibet was not of recent origin. Ever since the British set foot in Assam in 1824, they had constantly made efforts to explore the frontiers of Assam and prepare topographical surveys of the frontier areas. Exploration in the Abor and the Mishmi country in the middle of the nineteenth century had greatly increased the geographical knowledge then available of the north-east frontier. The Survey of India had also started systematically collecting information on the topography of the areas on the frontier between Assam and Tibet.

On the basis of the maps prepared with the help of the topographical information thus gathered, the Government of India sought, in 1913-14, to negotiate the delimitation of the boundary between Assam and Tibet in the tripartite conference between India, Tibet, and China convened primarily to discuss the political status of Tibet vis-a-vis China. In February 1914, Henry McMahon, the British Plenipotentiary, sent to Lonchen Shatra, his Tibetan counterpart, two maps showing the common, traditional boundary between India and Tibet, extending from the Izu Razi Pass in Burma in the east to the trijunction of Assam, Bhutan, and Tibet in the west, along with an explanatory note. On 25 March, Shatra informed McMahon, in reply to his letter of the previous day, that the Government of Tibet had, after a careful study, agreed to "the boundary as marked in red in the two copies of the maps." This boundary was also accepted by the Chinese delegate, Ivan Chen, on 27 April. On 3 June, the British and Tibetan representatives signed the Convention along with the two maps attached to it, showing in red and blue respectively the external position of Tibet and the boundary between the inner and outer zones of Tibet. The boundary between India and Tibet was shown in red.

In 1935, in the context of the reappraisal made of the British administration in India on the occasion of the enactment of the Government of India Act of 1935, the Sadiya and Balipara Frontier Tracts were classified as Excluded Areas in view of their special conditions. The Political Officer of the Balipara Frontier Tract found, on a visit to Tawang in 1938, that in spite of Tawang's location south of the 1914 boundary line (and hence within India), officials of the Tsona Dzong of Tibet claimed the authority to collect taxes from the Monpas of the area and to exercise judicial control over them. When he told them that they had no such authority, the Tibetans first pleaded ignorance of the 1914 boundary agreement. Later they sought to explain their activities away by pointing out that they had been allowed to maintain estates like Mago south of the 1914 line. The frontier and political officers of the Government of India were hard put to it to explain to the Tibetans the true import of the 1914 agreement and to bring home to them that they had in fact been trespassing on the territory of India all those years. In October 1944, the Foreign Office of the Government of Tibet informed the Political Officer in Sikkim that much against the Chinese wish Tibet fully accepted the validity of the 1914 line.

Since Independence several changes have been effected in the administrative set-up of NEFA, both to facilitate welfare activities and to enable the people to have a greater voice in their affairs. Especially, the tribes inhabiting the area have received much greater attention, and this is partly manifested in the numerous anthropological studies made in recent years. In order to end the isolation of the area as well as to facilitate movement within it, a massive road-building programme is in progress.

The border between NEFA and Tibet is a part of the Sino-Indian border, which is under dispute. China has declared that it does not recognize the McMahon Line defined in the Simla Convention of 1914. In 1962 it dramatized its rejection of the line by ordering its army to march across it. In fact, the Chinese troops came right

down to the foothills, which mark the administrative boundary between Assam and NEFA. The cease-fire and the unilateral withdrawal of Chinese troops have not brought any nearer a settlement of the Sino-Indian dispute over the border alignment here.

## BHUTAN

Bhutan did not have a separate status outside the political framework of India or Tibet in the early periods. According to both Bhutanese and Indian traditions, a line of Indian chiefs under the tutelege of Kamarupa ruled Bhutan up to the middle of the seventh century. Bhutan separated from Kamarupa after the death of Bhaskaravarman in 650, and thus exposed itself to incursions from Tibet. This began the process of the disintegration of Kamarupa and disturbed the political arrangement in the Eastern Himalaya.

The lamas who came to Bhutan from Tibet for missionary work from 1200 onwards exercised a measure of temporal control in Western Bhutan. Gyalwa Lhanangpa of the Nyo lineage, who was a student of Drikung Jigten Gonpo's, was perhaps the first to do so. It was from him that the Lhapa Kargyupa, a subsect of the Drikung Kargyupa, originated. The Lhapa Kargyupa applied the dzong system of Tibet to Bhutan, and became the chief rival of the Drukpa Kargyupa of Ralung.

When Phajo Dugom Shipgo and his five companions of the Drukpa Kargyupa came to Bhutan in the thirteenth century to claim the support of the Bhutanese chiefs for their sect, they found themselves pitted against the powerful adherents of the Lhapa Kargyupa. Phajo Dugom Shipgo was a student of Wonre Dama Sengge's (1177-1237). By his drive and energy he made the Drukpa Kargyupa the dominant sect of Bhutan. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, he built a small dzong on the right side of the upper Wang Chu and named it Dongon Dzong (Blue Stone Dzong). The majority of the aristocracy of Western Bhutan today claim descent from him. Pema Lingpa of

the fifteenth century, to whom the present royal dynasty traces its ancestry, was a member of his line.

Bhutan in the thirteenth century meant only Western Bhutan and the rivalry between the various sects of the Buddhism of Tibet for supremacy there was the most significant aspect of its history of the time.

The Lhapa Kargyupa was still strong when Ngawang Namgyal (1594-1651), a scion of the house of Gya of Druk and Ralung and the head of the Drukpa Kargyupa, came to Bhutan in 1616. He destroyed what little authority the Lhapa Kargyupa and other sects still wielded, and established himself as the theocratic ruler of Bhutan with the title of Shabdrung Rimpoche (or, as he is known in India, Dharma Raja).

When Ngawang Namgyal visited Thimphu, the people of the valley presented to him the Dongon Dzong in token of their acknowledgement of his supremacy. In 1641, he constructed another, larger dzong on the same site, and renamed it Tashi Cho Dzong (Good Luck Dzong). The Tashi Cho Dzong was repaired and renovated from time to time by the later rulers of the country, as parts of the Dzong were destroyed by fire several times. In 1960, Jigmi Dorji Wangchuk, the present king of Bhutan, conceived the idea of constructing a new dzong on the foundation of the old Tashi Cho Dzong, as the old structure had been damaged by a series of earthquakes. This new dzong is today the seat of the Government of Bhutan.

In his struggle for supremacy, Ngawang Namgyal faced opposition both from the hierarchy of the Ralung Monastery. Pagsam Wangpo (1593-1641), a bastard brother of Dalai Lama V, and from the ruler of Tsang, Depa Tsangpa Phuntsok Namgyal. His success against all his internal rivals and the Tibetans greatly impressed his neighbours, and he received many friendly missions from the rulers of Cooch Bihar and Gorkha. The king of Ladakh granted him a number of villages in Western Tibet (such as Darchhen, Nyanri Gompa, and Zuthulphu Gompa around the holy Mount Kailas; Dengmar, Rimpung, Doba, Khorehag, and Ge

Narayan had extended his sway over all Lower Assam and occupied the Bhutanese territory between the Hindola and Sankosh rivers. In the factional feuds in Cooch Bihar, Bhutan frequently supported the Raikat (also called Raja) of Baikunthapur, hereditary chief minister of Cooch Bihar, against the Nazir Dev of Balrampur, hereditary commander-in-chief of Cooch Bihar. The Bhutanese established firm influence in the affairs of Cooch Bihar in 1711 after an uneasy compromise between Nazir Dev Shant Narayan and his ally, the Mughal subadar of Bengal, on the one hand, and Raikat Darpa Dev and the Bhutanese on the other. The decline of the Mughal power in the early part of the eighteenth century enabled the Bhutanese to strengthen their position further in the affairs of Cooch Bihar. The Government of Bhutan even stationed an agent, Gya Chila, along with an escort in Cooch Bihar. It also struck the Ngutanu (a silver coin of the value of a half-rupee) for circulation in Cooch Bihar. In 1766, Nazir Dev Rudra Narayan contrived the murder of the infant Raja Debendra Narayan (1764-66), then under Bhutanese protection. When the question of succession to the throne of Cooch Bihar came up, the Bhutanese not only put up a candidate, a step-brother of the late Raja's, but also compelled the Nazir Dev, who was intending to raise to the throne his own nephew Khagendra Narayan, to leave Cooch Bihar. The Nazir Dev thereupon sought the assistance of the Government of the East India Company against the Bhutanese.

The confusion in the south proved calamitous to Tenzin, Desi of Bhutan since 1765. In 1768, Shidar, who had served in high offices of State, became Desi. In 1770, he invaded Sikkim and occupied all the land east of the Tista River. The Bhutanese force, however, withdrew after a severe reverse at Phodong. In order to strengthen his position, Shidar forged alliances with Panchen Lama III (Palden Yishi, 1738-80) and Raja Prithvi Narayan Shah of Nepal (r. 1742-75). The alliances were forged largely to counter the growing threat from the East India Company to the security of the northern countries. The extensive



wood has now disappeared from the scene of this beautiful valley: the Bhutanese utilized it to build Bhutan's first air-field in 1968.

In 1728-30, there was a civil war over the question of succession to the office of Shabdung Rimpoche. The Tibetans seized this opportunity to intervene in Bhutanese affairs. Defying the wishes of important members of the Bhutanese clergy, the eighth Desi of Bhutan, Wang Paljor, installed his own chief councillor, Lama Chhole Namgyal, as Shabdung Rimpoche II. The high Bhutanese lamas retaliated by an appeal to arms. From his refuge in Lhuntse Dzong in North Bhutan, Desi Wang Paljor sought military support from Miwang Pholhane of Tibet. But he was hunted down and slain by the man who succeeded him. The high lamas thereupon reinstalled their nominee and also appointed a new Desi. The two rival Bhutanese factions again clashed at a point north of Pangri Sampa near Thimphu. They were led respectively by the new Desi and by Dondub Gyalpo of Kabi. This time Pholhane intervened, and the frontier forces of Tibet crossed into Bhutan towards the end of 1730 and forced the Bhutanese to recognize Jigmi Dakpa as Shabdung Rimpoche II (1724-61). Panchen Lama II (Lobsang Yishi, 1663-1737), Karmapa Changchub Dorji, and the abbot of Sakya interceded with Pholhane and persuaded him to consent to an armistice. The terms of the armistice were negotiated at Paro, but the peace agreement was signed at Thimphu. The Bhutanese also undertook to station a representative in Lhasa to guarantee their fulfilling their obligations under the agreement. This custom, known as *Lochak*, lasted till the Chinese take-over of Tibet in the summer of 1951.

Not being able to expand in the east and the north, Bhutan tried to expand in the south and the west. It often made inroads upon Cooch Bihar, a buffer between Bengal and Bhutan, and occupied large tracts of territory along the foothills, especially after the death of the powerful Raja Nar Narayan (r. 1555-87) in 1587, the second and the most powerful among the rulers of Cooch Bihar. Raja Nar

British and to enable him to fight against the rebel regime, the Panchen Lama interceded on Shidar's behalf with Warren Hastings. The Panchen Lama's letter reached Calcutta on 29 March 1774. Hastings had then already received a communication from the new Bhutanese rulers soliciting peace, offering to give up the whole open country, and limiting their claim just to the woods and the lowlands below the foothills and to the freedom to trade duty-free as formerly with Rangpur. Hastings had made up his mind to cease his military operations against Bhutan on receiving this communication, but he now tried to make political capital out of the whole affair by announcing that his decision was due entirely to his regard for the Panchen Lama. He obviously calculated that to offer easy peace terms to Bhutan, ostensibly at the request of the Panchen Lama, was the best way to establish friendly relations with Tibet. Moreover, there was a report that Raja Chet Singh of Varanasi was in correspondence with the Panchen Lama. Hastings naturally thought that any unresponsive attitude on his part might make the Panchen Lama continue his diplomatic exchanges with the various rajas in India.

Thus, in anticipation of friendly relations with Tibet, Hastings concluded peace with Bhutan on 25 April 1774 at Fort William in Calcutta. The Bhutanese agreed to surrender the Raja of Cooch Bihar. In order to make a good impression upon Bhutan, Hastings returned to Bhutan a part of the disputed Duar territory on the border between Bhutan and Bengal. As he now had access to Bhutan and Tibet, he deputed two of his men, George Bogle and Alexander Hamilton, to visit both Bhutan and Tibet and explore the possibilities of trade in that direction as well as to obtain political intelligence. Another British mission went to Bhutan, under Samuel Turner, in 1783-84.

There was no further clash between Bhutan and the East India Company for nearly half a century. In 1826, the Bhutanese and the British again clashed on the question of the Duars. There were seven Duars on the border between

reconnaissance made by British surveyors on the frontiers of Bengal with Bhutan and Nepal and the frequent dispatch of British troops to the frontier regions in Assam had created uneasiness all round.

Under the leadership of Desi Shidar, the Bhutanese kept up their pressure upon Cooch Bihar. The Crown Prince of Cooch Bihar and the Queen of Raja Dhairjendra Narayan were kidnapped in 1771. The Raja himself was abducted in 1772. The Nazir Dev, therefore, approached the British for the second time for help against the Bhutanese. On 5 April 1773, he signed an agreement with the Company and undertook to pay immediately Rs 50,000 to the British Collector of Rangpur to defray the expenses of the troops sent to assist him, and subsequently to pay one half of the State revenues to the Company. Cooch Bihar thus entered into feudatory relations with the British for the first time. Warren Hastings, Governor-General of the Company (1772-85), who had already been convinced of the need to possess Cooch Bihar as it was within the natural boundaries of Bengal, accorded protection to Cooch Bihar at once by sending an expedition to drive away the Bhutanese. He thought that he could make certain other gains too at the expense of Bhutan in the event of the expedition being successful. The British drove the Bhutanese out of Cooch Bihar in the spring of 1773 and occupied their forts of Chicha, Daling, and Passakh.

While Desi Shidar was thus confronted by British troops on the border between Bhutan and Cooch Bihar, his ally Prithvi Narayan Shah, a foe of the British, called the attention of Panchen Lama III to the plight of Shidar and persuaded him to intercede with the British on behalf of the Bhutanese. In the meantime, taking advantage of his absence at Baxa Duar, which is one of the principal passes into Bhutan, for conducting operations against the British troops, the rival faction in Bhutan brought off a coup d'état. Neither Prithvi Narayan Shah nor the Panchen Lama recognized the new regime in Bhutan. To relieve the dethroned Shidar from his unhappy engagement with the

India on its part agreed to pay Bhutan a subsidy of Rs 25,000 in the first year, Rs 35,000 in the second, Rs 45,000 in the third, and Rs 50,000 every year thereafter.

The British retained possession of the entire strip of the low, fertile country below the Bhutanese hills as well as the hilly tract of Daling or Damsang, which was co-extensive with the Western Duars, to the east of the Tista River. The country so annexed was formed into two districts: the Eastern Duars and the Western Duars. The Eastern Duars were later incorporated into the co-extensive Goalpara District of Assam. On 1 January 1867, the Daling tract was transferred to the Darjeeling District. On 1 January 1869, the Western Duars, together with the Morang strip below the Darjeeling hills, were made into a new district, the district of Jalpaiguri, which, until then, had no separate entity: it had been a part of the district of Rangpur.

Subsequent Bhutanese history is characterized by internal feuds, with group alignments changing frequently. The Tongsa Ponlop and the Paro Ponlop were major figures in the wrangles. Jigmi Namgyal (1825-81) became Tongsa Ponlop in 1853 and Desi in 1870. When he retired as Desi in 1873, he appointed his brother Kyitsalpa in his place. Kyitsalpa ruled till 1879. In the civil war in 1876, the Paro Ponlop, whose name was Tsewang Norbu, and the Punakha Dzongpon sought asylum at Kalimpong. The Government of India not merely gave them asylum and an allowance but also protected them by refusing to deliver them up on demand to Jigmi Namgyal on behalf of the Lhengye Tso (State Council of Bhutan). Jigmi Namgyal defeated Dzongpon Darlung Topgye, the strong man of Wangdi Phodang, and thus laid the foundations of the political power of the present royal dynasty.

Ugyen Wangchuk, who was Tongsa Ponlop from 1881 to 1907, was the son of Jigmi Wangchuk. Along with the Paro Ponlop (to whom he was related), he rebelled against the Desi, who was supported by Phuntsok Dorji and Alu Dorji, the Dzongpons of Punakha and Thimphu respectively. In the battle of Chang Limithang, fought immediately below

Assam and Bhutan. These Duars had once been the property of the Ahom rulers of Assam and the Bhutanese had acquired them in the eighteenth century by undertaking to pay them in return an annual tribute consisting of a fixed number of yak-tails, ponies, and ~~blankets~~, as well as a fixed quantity of musk and gold-dust.

In 1837-38, the Company sent a mission to Bhutan under Captain R. B. Pemberton to settle the disputes over the Assam Duars, but the effort came to nothing. In 1841, the Company decided to annex permanently all the Assam Duars and pay a sum of Rs 10,000 to Bhutan annually by way of compensation. The British felt annoyed with Bhutan for its sympathetic attitude towards the general uprising in India against British rule in 1857. To express their displeasure, they alleged that the Bhutanese had demanded an increase in the amount of the subsidy in 1854, but that they had turned down the demand peremptorily. There were frequent disturbances in the Assam and Bengal Duars on account of this strain in the relations between them. In 1863 the British sent Ashley Eden, who was then Secretary to the Government of Bengal, as their emissary to persuade the Bhutanese to enter into a relationship more acceptable from the British point of view. The Bhutanese were so angry with the British that they tried to prevent his coming. When he forced himself upon them, they not only dealt with him with discourtesy but also forced him to sign an agreement obligating the British to return all the Duars to Bhutan as well as all runaway slaves and political offenders. On Eden's return to Calcutta, the Government of India repudiated the agreement. On 22 November 1864, it also declared war on Bhutan. The Bhutanese fought hard, but were forced to make peace in the end. On 11 November 1865, they signed a treaty in Calcutta agreeing to free trade and conceding the right of the Government of India to arbitrate in all disputes that might arise between Bhutan on the one hand and Cooch Bihar and Sikkim on the other. They also allowed the Daling/Kalimpong area to be attached to the British possessions in India. The Government of

were held there helped Younghusband in getting a convention signed by the high monks and senior officials of the Government of Tibet on 7 September 1904. The Government of India conferred the insignia of the Knight Commander of the Indian Empire on Ugyen Wangchuk in recognition of his services to the British mission of 1903-04.

In contrast, Dao Paljor, the Paro Ponlop, exhibited a hostile attitude. He is reported to have instructed his frontier officers: "If the Sahibs come with but few soldiers, you must beat them, and turn them out, and do whatever is necessary. If they come with many soldiers, I will send a high officer from here with soldiers to oppose them."

The Shabdung Rimpoche and the Desi died in 1903 and 1904 respectively. Yishi Ngodub (1851-1917), who was then Je Khempo (Lord Abbot), briefly held both offices (1904-7). However, in practice, Ugyen Wangchuk managed all temporal affairs with the help of the State Council. The Bhutanese dignitaries, high lamas and lay chiefs, deliberated together and elected Ugyen Wangchuk, the most influential chief among the contenders for the office of Desi, as the hereditary Druk Gyalpo (King of Bhutan), called the Maharaja of Bhutan in India. For some time, a few local chiefs, who owed allegiance to Dao Paljor, the Paro Ponlop (who was Ugyen Wangchuk's erstwhile adversary), remained practically independent. Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuk (r. 1907-28) won the loyalty of all the chiefs after the death of Dao Paljor. Je Khempo Yishi Ngodub died in 1917.

From the first Druk Desi, who was appointed by the first Shabdung Rimpoche himself, down to 1904, a long line of fifty-six ecclesiastical and lay regents ruled Bhutan. Up to the time of Desi Shidar, the regents were all ecclesiastics. The first regent was a lama of the hierarchical rank of *umze*.

What happened in Tibet in the post-1904 period affected Bhutan as well, for no sooner had Chao Erh-feng, Warden of the Szechwan Marches with Tibet, occupied Lhasa early in February 1910 and compelled Dalai Lama XIII to seek refuge in India than he laid claim to Bhutan along with

Thimphu on the right bank of the river in the summer of 1885, Phuntsok Dorji was killed. Alu Dorji fled to Tibet. Ugyen Wangchuk established himself so firmly that no significant civil or internecine strife occurred in Bhutan thereafter. Ngodub again came to fight in Ugyen Wangchuk's time but escaped to Baxa Duar, where the British had set up a military outpost. Thus, completely humiliated, Alu Dorji appealed to Dalai Lama XIII (Thubten Gyatso, 1876-1933) for help. Even this came to nothing. He died in Yatung after some time. There is a rumour that he committed suicide. . . .

During the Anglo-Tibetan War of 1888-89, Bhutan did not give any assistance to Tibet. On the restoration of peace in 1890, the Chinese again began to take an interest in Bhutan, and, on the recommendation of Kwang Hsh, Assistant Amban (Resident) in Lhasa, the Emperor of China (1875-98) conferred upon the Tongsa Ponlop and the Paro Ponlop the titles of Chief and Deputy Chief of Bhutan respectively. In 1891 the Amban visited Paro and carried with him a letter, with the seal of the Emperor, for the Tongsa Ponlop. . . .

The frontier officials of the Government of India viewed with great concern the steady growth of China's influence in Bhutan. Alleging that the Bhutanese had committed certain outrages in certain villages on the Goalpara border, the Government of India suspended the payment of its annual subsidy to Bhutan. Soon, however, the two Governments resumed friendly relations, and in 1894 the Government of India paid the subsidy in full. This was largely due to the good offices of Ugyen of Ha, the Bhutanese Agent at Kalimpong in India. The British military expedition to Tibet in 1903-04 under Colonel F. E. Younghusband received considerable support from Bhutan. Ugyen Wangchuk, the Tongsa Ponlop, assured full co-operation to the British and allowed a part of Western Bhutan to be surveyed for a road up the Amo Chu. Later, along with Lama Kunsang, a relative of his, he accompanied the British expedition to Lhasa. The great respect in which these Bhutanese leaders

matter of foreign affairs binding on Bhutan.

Cordial and friendly relations have subsisted between Bhutan and India since the 1949 treaty. Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuk (r. 1952—), third in the line, visited India in the summer of 1954. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India visited Bhutan in September 1958. In September 1959, a Bhutanese delegation headed by Jigmi Dorji of Ha visited New Delhi to discuss with the Government of India the development needs of Bhutan. After much discussion on the subject of aid, India paid Bhutan a sum of Rs 150,000,000 by way of aid. King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk again visited New Delhi, in February 1961, especially to discuss Indo-Bhutanese relations and Bhutan's defence and economic development.

Indo-Bhutanese relations have been put to a great strain in recent years, especially after the Sino-Indian border conflict exposed Chinese designs in the Himalaya, including Bhutan. Whereas, in a public address in Bhutan on 23 September 1958, Prime Minister Nehru ruled out any pressure from India's side on Bhutan which might impair the independent status of Bhutan, China published maps showing an area of at least 300 square miles of Bhutanese territory as China's. When India protested to China against this cartographic aggression, China replied that it respected the proper relations between India and Bhutan. However, Nehru, realizing the implications of the Chinese stand, stated categorically in the Lok Sabha on 28 August 1959 that the protection of the territorial integrity and borders of Bhutan was the responsibility of the Government of India and that India would regard any aggression on Bhutan as an aggression on India.

The internal situation of Bhutan, peaceful since King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk's accession on 28 October 1952, was disturbed with the assassination of Jigmi Dorji of Ha on 5 April 1964 by an agent of the Deputy Chief of the Army Staff, Da Tsap (Lieutenant-Colonel) Namgyal, an uncle of the King. Da Tsap Namgyal had shared the responsibility of administering the country in the King's absence in Swit-



Nepal and Sikkim. He even tried to lure the Bhutanese with the promise of Chinese aid against the "wicked, aggressive" foreigners. In view of this Chinese effort to bring Bhutan within its sphere of influence the Government of India thought it expedient to persuade Bhutan to revise the 1865 treaty. The revised treaty, which was signed on 8 January 1910, enjoined the Government of India to abstain from interference in the internal affairs of Bhutan. Further, Bhutan was obligated to abide by the advice of the Government of India in the conduct of its external relations. The Government of India raised its annual subsidy to Bhutan from Rs 50,000 to Rs 100,000. It also paid Rs 200,000 annually to Bhutan in lieu of the excise collected on the goods traded between Assam/Bengal and Bhutan.

When the British left India in 1947, Bhutan was autonomous. The British control over it had been tighter than over Nepal and lighter than over Sikkim. Towards the end of 1948 a Bhutanese delegation visited India to discuss Bhutan's relations with the Government of India. India agreed to respect Bhutan's internal autonomy on condition that Bhutan maintained the same relationship with independent India as it had maintained with British India. Druk Gyalpo Jigmi Wangchuk (r. 1928-52), second in the line, renewed Bhutanese connexion with India by signing a 10-Article treaty on 8 August 1949, and agreed "to be guided by the advice of the Government of India" in the conduct of its external affairs in return for India's pledge not to interfere in Bhutan's internal affairs. India also agreed to pay Bhutan a subsidy of Rs 500,000 a year, and returned to it the 32-square-mile Dewangiri area, which now forms the south-eastern tip of Bhutan. The other Articles of the treaty related to free import by Bhutan, with the approval of the Government of India, from or through India, arms, ammunition, and machinery required for the development of Bhutan. The Government of Bhutan also undertook neither to export those items nor to allow any private individual to do so. The 1949 treaty, however, had no clause relating to Bhutan's defence; nor did it make India's advice in the

ing Bhutan to leave Sikkim alone. In 1708 the Bhutanese decided to evacuate the part of Sikkim which lies to the west of the Tista River, except certain south-east areas near and extending up to the Tagona La. Thus Sikkim lost the bulk of an area called *Mon lung kha zi*, which now forms part of the subdivision of Kalimpong.

To secure the eastern border of the country against the increasing Bhutanese raids across it, Gyunmi Namgyal (1707-33) built extensive fortifications there. He conscripted a large number of the Lepchas to work on these fortifications. The Lepchas revolted against the conscription policy. The Lepcha revolt continued during the reign of Namgyal Phuntsok (1733-80) as well.

After Gyunmi Namgyal's death, a dispute arose regarding the succession between the Bhotiyas and the Lepchas, with the latter supporting the title of Namgyal Phuntsok. It continued for five years. At last Rabden Sherpa, a Tibetan who held charge of the administration during the interregnum, reached an agreement with the Lepchas which confirmed Namgyal Phuntsok on the throne of Sikkim and gave the Lepchas a greater share in the administration of the country. He also took in hand the codification of the laws of Sikkim and levied land tax on all the homesteads in the country. There was a Lepcha uprising in 1752 against the policies of the administration, but it was quickly put down. The loyalty of the Lepchas was won gradually, but steadily in subsequent years.

The internal instability in Sikkim coincided with the rise of Desi Shidar in Bhutan and Raja Prithvi Narayan Shah in Nepal in the late 1760s. Bhutan invaded Sikkim in 1770 and occupied all territory east of the Tista River. In 1773-74 Nepal occupied Sikkimese territory west of the Tista. A treaty concluded in 1775 fixed the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal at the Sango Chu, Sangdi Dzong, Malliyang, and the Lha Chu (the sacred Kankai River), a western tributary of the Meechi River, and also settled all outstanding issues relating to trade and commerce between Sikkim and Nepal. Notwithstanding the treaty of 1775, the Gorkhas again

zerland. A number of Bhutanese officers attempted a coup d'état in December 1964. They later escaped to Nepal and are endeavouring to return to power in Bhutan. There is no doubt that the King is exceedingly loved and respected by the people, but there will be no durable peace so long as the feudatories, who largely control the political situation of Bhutan, continue their intrigues. In the summer of 1963 the Druk Gyalpo assumed full regal dignity and permitted his being referred to as His Majesty the King of Bhutan.

### SIKKIM

Sikkim does not appear in the historical complex of the Himalaya border countries until the early 1640s. The history of Sikkim before 1642 is the history of the Lepcha people. Phuntsock Namgyal (1604-70), the first to be consecrated ruler of Sikkim with the title of *Chogyal* (Religious King) by the three lamas of the three Nyingma sub-sects in 1642, brought all Lepchas under one authority. He organized the first centralized administration in the country and created twelve dzongs — namely Lassu, Dallom, Yangthang, Gangtok, Rhenok, Barmiak, Tashiding, Song, Labing, Maling, Simik, and Pandom — each under a Lepcha dzongpon belonging to one of the leading Lepcha families of the country.

In the time of Chagdor Namgyal (1686-1716), the third ruler of Sikkim, there were fratricidal wars between members of the royal family which resulted in loss of territory for the kingdom. In 1700 Pedit Wangmo, the elder half-sister of Chagdor Namgyal, fell out with him and sought the help of Bhutan in her scheme to dethrone him and if possible to murder him. The Bhutanese invaded and occupied Sikkim as far west as Rabdantse. Chagdor Namgyal, who was a minor, fled to Tibet and lived as an exile there for eight years — that is till 1708. The Government of Tibet evinced great interest in Chagdor Namgyal, and even granted him estates near Shigatse and Lake Yamdok in Southern Tibet; but it did not show any special inclination to help Chagdor Namgyal immediately, and contented itself by ask-

tion of the Bhotiyas. The ruler and his group went so far as to accomplish the assassination of a Lepcha minister in 1827. Thereupon, feeling insecure, hundreds of Lepchas migrated to the Ilam area of Eastern Nepal. With the connivance of the Gorkhas, they frequently raided Western Sikkim and caused several border disputes between Nepal and Sikkim. In pursuance of the terms of the 1817 treaty, Sikkim referred the matter for arbitration to the Governor-General of the East India Company, who deputed J. W. Grant, who was Commercial Resident at Malda, and Captain George William Aylmer Lloyd, who commanded the British frontier force at Titaliya, to look into the matter and make an award. As a result of their intervention, the Lepcha invaders of Eastern Nepal were compelled to return to Nepal. A small community of Lepchas, descendants of those emigrants, is still there in Eastern Nepal.

Grant and Lloyd availed themselves of this tour in the southern hills of Sikkim to select a suitable site for a sanatorium for British troops as well as a base for the pursuit of British commercial and political interests in the Eastern Himalaya. Their choice fell on the Darjeeling hill. The British Government offered to buy the site or to exchange some other area for it, but Sikkim appeared reluctant to part with it. However, having regard to the constant need for British help and protection in putting down the Lepchas and the uncertain attitude of Tibet, Tsugphu Namgyal changed his mind. He presented to the British Government on 1 February 1835, in the language of the grant deed, "all the land south of the Great Rangeet River, east of the Balasun, Kahel, and Little Rangeet rivers, and west of the Rungno and Mahanadi rivers." Instead of an equivalent tract in exchange, the British Government sanctioned an annual subsidy of Rs 3,000 as compensation to Sikkim in 1841. It increased it to Rs 6,000 in 1846.

The territory thus ceded to the British later became the nucleus of the district of Darjeeling. The British Government first placed it under a Superintendent who, besides the administration and development of Darjeeling, held charge

occupied Ilam on the Kankai River and Taple Dzong on the left bank of the Tamar River in 1788. Damodar Pande, the Gorkha General, also occupied the whole lower Tista basin, including the Morang along the foothills of the Sikkim Himalaya, in 1788-89. Tenzin Namgyal (1769-93), the sixth ruler of Sikkim, escaped to North Sikkim to reassemble his troops and to solicit aid from Tibet. Tibet, which was already involved in a conflict with Nepal, could render no assistance. Eventually, the Chinese, who came to the rescue of Tibet, imposed a harsh treaty on Nepal in 1792. They annexed the Chumbi Valley to Tibet, making the Chola-Jelep range the northern and eastern boundary of Sikkim. On the western side they let the Gorkhas keep all of the Sikkimese area between the Tamar River and the Singali La ridge. Tenzin Namgyal's successors blamed Bhutan for the trouble between Sikkim and Nepal. According to Bhutanese tradition, Bhutan offered to help Sikkim, but Sikkim did not accept the offer. After the rupture between Nepal and Tibet in 1788, the Swayambhunath Temple in Kathmandu came under the protection of the Shabdung Rimpoche of Bhutan, who was then most friendly with Nepal.

Sikkim finally turned to the British for help against the Gorkhas. Owing to Sikkim's strategic importance, the British sought its co-operation in their war with Nepal in 1814-15. By a treaty signed at the end of the war, Nepal surrendered to the British the Morang lowland, which had originally been a part of Sikkim but which had been annexed by Nepal in 1788-90. The British Political Agent on the Purnia frontier, by an agreement with the representative of Sikkim at Titaliya on 10 February 1817, restored to Tsugphu Namgyal (1800-83) the southern part of Sikkim which had been under the occupation of Nepal. The British, however, reserved to themselves the right to arbitrate in any dispute that might arise between Sikkim and Nepal.

Sikkim now had security against external aggression, but it had no respite yet from its old internal feuds. The Lepchas, who had been in the vanguard of the struggle against the Gorkha invaders, were opposed to the domina-

of British political relations with Sikkim.

In 1850, the British annexed the Sikkim Morang and the portion of the Sikkim hills bounded by the Ramman River on the north, by the Great Rangit and the Tista on the east, and by Nepal on the west. The designation of the Superintendent was changed to that of Deputy Commissioner in 1850.

During 1839-61, when A. Campbell, who was earlier Assistant Resident in Kathmandu, was Superintendent of Darjeeling, the relations between the British and Sikkim deteriorated. Darjeeling provided numerous facilities for free trade both in mercantile commodities and in labour; its extensive forest lands, which could be reclaimed for cultivation, attracted large numbers of the Lepchas and the Nepalese to migrate and settle there. Such developments not only threatened the privileges traditionally enjoyed by certain Bhotiya families of Sikkim—for instance, their monopoly of trade in this part of the Himalaya—but also disturbed the age-old population balance and intertribal relations in Sikkim. The presence of the British so close to Sikkim also became a source of embarrassment in Sikkim's relations with Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet. In 1844 the ruler of Sikkim and the Paro Ponlop of Bhutan clashed at Phari in Tibet. The Government of Tibet gave vent to its displeasure by restricting the Sikkim ruler's visits to Lhasa to one in eight years, as also by curtailing the grazing rights that the Sikkimese on the border had always enjoyed in Tibet. In 1847, therefore, the ruler of Sikkim appointed as his Chief Minister one Tokhang Namgyal, a Tibetan of strong anti-British convictions. Tokhang Namgyal was also a relative—the husband of an illegitimate daughter—of the ruler. On account of his advancing age, Tsugphu Namgyal left all State affairs to the management of Tokhang Namgyal.

In 1848 Toklung Namgyal refused permission to J. D. Hooker, a noted British botanist, to explore Sikkim. When, however, Campbell, the Superintendent, threatened to report the matter to the Governor-General, he gave in. In November 1849 he ordered the arrest of Campbell and Hooker who had been travelling in Sikkim with the permission of

However, Dorji Lupon, Abbot of the Phodong Monastery, and A. W. Paul, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, were able to restore peace by their joint efforts. The proposal was also slightly modified to make it acceptable to all concerned.

Thutob Namgyal, who had risen to power with British support, could not stand up to the pressure of the anti-British Bhotiyas and Tibetans. Early in 1886, he abruptly disavowed his subordination to the Government of India, as enjoined by the 1861 treaty. In the same year the British sent a mission to Tibet under one Colman Macaulay, who was Secretary to the Government of Bengal at that time, to explore the possibilities of trade with that country. The mission, however, withdrew from Tibet without completing its work in deference to the wishes of the Chinese. No sooner had the mission withdrawn than the Tibetans occupied a strip of the territory of Sikkim south of the Jelep La, nearly twenty miles deep. Thutob Namgyal, in tune with the anti-British sentiment then obtaining, condoned the Tibetan action instead of protesting against it.

Unable to invoke the 1861 treaty in the face of this attitude of Thutob Namgyal, the Government of India opted for a military solution of the situation. It commenced its operations early in March 1888, and drove the Tibetans out of Lingtu by September. It appointed a Political Officer at Gangtok in June 1889, to serve at first as its observer on the Tibetan frontier and eventually as its representative in Bhutan and Tibet.

lang on 28 March 1861, embodied all these provisions.

The Government of India was now in a position to annex Sikkim, but did not do so as it did not wish to involve itself in any conflict with Tibet, which had a claim to Sikkim. The 1861 treaty checked Tibetan influence in Sikkim for a time. Sidkyong Namgyal visited Darjeeling in March 1873 and met George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (1871-74). He was also able to settle Sikkim's disputes with Bhutan over grazing rights to mutual satisfaction.

In 1874, Sidkyong Namgyal passed away. Tokhang Namgyal thereupon decided to install Thinde Namgyal, half-brother of the deceased ruler, on the throne. He denounced the treaty provisions, especially those relating to the right of the Government of India to construct roads, the large-scale influx of Nepalese settlers, and the farming out of Sikkimese copper mines to Nepalese merchants from Darjeeling. Meanwhile John Ware Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, who had been deputed to investigate the possibility of re-establishing British trade with Tibet, brought to the notice of the Bengal administration, on his return from a visit to the border between Tibet and Sikkim in 1873, a communication addressed by the Chinese Amban in Lhasa to the ruler of Sikkim, calling upon him not to encourage road-building in his territory and to prevent British officers from crossing the border into Tibet. Although these were grave provocations, the British overlooked them in view of Edgar's other favourable observations and the conclusion of a Sino-British convention at Chefoo (in China) on 13 September 1876. A road was constructed through Sikkim to the Jelep La on the Tibetan border. In 1878, Ashley Eden, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, proposed to Thutob Namgyal (r. 1874-1914), the tenth ruler of Sikkim, an arrangement limiting Nepalese settlement to the south of a line drawn across Sikkim from the east to the west just a few miles to the north of Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. An influential section of the Bhotiyas of Sikkim vehemently opposed this arrangement; there were riots at Rhenok between the Bhotiyas and the Nepalese in 1880.



among other things, the Tibetan endorsement of the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet as defined in the Anglo-Chinese convention of 1890 as also of the commercial rights that the British had secured in Tibet through the Trade Regulations, 1893.

There occurred no important event until the British withdrawal from India and the consequent lapse of British paramountcy over Sikkim in the summer of 1947. Pending negotiations for a fresh or modified treaty spelling out precisely the nature and extent of its relations with independent India, Sikkim signed a standstill agreement which continued the same old relations between Sikkim and the Government of India.

The British had always classed Sikkim as a princely State like many other States of India such as Bashahr, Manipur, and Patiala. Owing, however, to its strategic position on the Indo-Tibetan frontier, they had made it the charge of the External Affairs Department of the Government of India. This was in contrast to the status they had accorded to Manipur: they had made Manipur, though also a frontier State, the charge of the Political Department of the Government of India in view of the fact that the country across the border was Burma, then a British possession. On 5 December 1950, India's Political Officer in Sikkim and the Maharaja of Sikkim signed a treaty at Gangtok. This treaty, which seems to have taken due account of Sikkim's geographical and strategic border position, re-established Sikkim as a protectorate of the Government of India with autonomy in internal affairs "subject to the provisions of the Treaty." It put Sikkim's external relations, defence, and strategic communications under the control of the Government of India and entitled Sikkim to receive from India a subsidy of Rs 300,000 a year "so long as the terms of this Treaty are duly observed by the Government of Sikkim." It accorded to Sikkim the same status in relation to independent India as that it had had in relation to the British authorities in pre-Independence India.

As a princely State of India, Sikkim had been under the

in the spring of 1892. But before he could reach Waling, close to the Nepalese-Tibetan border, the Nepalese authorities, who were friendly to the British, were able to intercept him. The Government of India relieved him of his administrative functions as a punishment, and kept him under surveillance at Kurseong in the Darjeeling District till November 1895. It asked White to administer Sikkim with the assistance of the State Council. It was not until 1918 that Sikkim was able to regain its autonomy.

In order to settle certain issues between Sikkim and Tibet, the Government of India entered into negotiations with the Chinese Amban in Tibet. The Amban insisted that Sikkim should recognize its *de jure* dependence on Tibet and China. This was totally unacceptable to the Government of India. The Chinese finally recognized the British protectorate over Sikkim, and consented to the discontinuance by Sikkim of the practice of sending presents to Tibet. On 7 March 1890, the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, and the Amban, Sheng Tai, signed at Darjeeling a convention which made the Government of India solely responsible for the internal and external affairs of Sikkim and recognized the upper waters of the Tista River system as marking the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet. The British also secured on 5 December 1893 a supplementary agreement—Trade Regulations, 1893—concerning Indo-Tibetan trade.

As Tibet was not a party to these agreements, it violated the border agreed upon in them just to show that it was not bound by them. The British, therefore, decided in the summer of 1894 to appoint, in consultation with the Chinese, a joint boundary commission to demarcate the boundary on the ground. In April 1895, a British party led by White reached the border to start the work of demarcation, but as the Chinese and the Tibetans did not turn up, it returned disappointed. The relations between Tibet and the British went on worsening. Finally, in 1903, the British sent a military expedition to Tibet under Colonel F. E. Younghusband. The expedition went as far as Lhasa and got Tibet to sign a convention on 7 September 1904 which embodied,

## NEPAL

Tradition reserves the name Nepal to the towns of Kathmandu, Bhatgaon, and Patan in the Bagmati Valley. The whole area known today as Nepal acquired that name only after it was conquered by the Gorkhas in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The *Vamshavilas*, which give genealogical accounts of the royal houses of Nepal, speak of a time when the central valley was totally submerged in water. A more or less systematic history starts only with the establishment of political authority by the first Kirat King of Nepal about 600 B.C. The Kirats ruled over the Bagmati Valley till some time in the first century A.D., and they were followed by the Lichchhavis, who initiated the Nepal era in A.D. 100. The first phase of Lichchhavi rule did not last long, owing perhaps to the rise of the imperial Gupta dynasty in Magadh (South Bihar, south of the Ganga) in the beginning of the fourth century. Initially, the Guptas sought support from the Lichchhavis. That they did so is evident from the prominence given to the marriage of the Lichchhavi Princess Kumaradevi to Chandragupta (c. 320), founder of the Gupta Empire. Indeed there are representations of that event on the gold coins struck during the reign of Chandragupta. Gradually, however, the Lichchhavis lost their importance. And in the time of Samudragupta (320-75), they were just vassals allowed to enjoy a measure of internal autonomy.

Manadeva (462-505) took advantage of the decline in the Gupta power and overthrew the Gupta yoke. His dominions extended even beyond the Bagmati Valley. Even though his kingdom did not extend south of the Tarai, his strong position in Nepal seems to have contained the expansionism of the later Gupta and Maukhari kings of the Ganga basin. His achievements in various spheres are found recorded in an inscription on a pillar at Changunarayan near Kathmandu. His successors, however, were weaklings, and power passed into the hands of their Mahasamanta (High

paramountcy of the British Crown. The Government of India would have been within its rights if it had insisted that Sikkim, like other princely States of India, should accede to the Indian Union. In fact, in the early years of India's Independence, the more vocal among the democratic elements in Sikkim, led by the Sikkim State Congress, wanted Sikkim to merge with the Indian Union. They had also campaigned for a gradual extension of the Indian Constitution to the State, as well as for a representation to the State in India's Parliament on the pattern of Jammu and Kashmir.

Since 1947 Sikkim has witnessed the growth of a strong movement for the democratization of the State. The socio-political set-up of the country is such that, despite being a minority, the Bhotiyas control the Government and own large landholdings. This is naturally disliked by the people of Nepalese origin, who constitute the major part of Sikkim's population. They are, therefore, in the vanguard of the movement for the democratization of the country. The movement, initially inspired by the Indian struggle for freedom, has slowly gathered momentum. In May 1949, under its aegis, there was a major demonstration against the Maharaja at Gangtok. The objective was to persuade him to concede a democratic set-up for the country. India also intervened in the matter, and a popular Ministry was formed. The Ministry was dismissed not long after for various reasons, and a senior Indian official appointed to act as Diwan (Chief Minister) in the State. In 1962, consequent of the trouble on the Sikkimese-Tibetan border, a State of Emergency was declared, and all powers were vested in the Maharaja, the Chogyal of Sikkim.

The British at first made it a practice to refer to the ruler of Sikkim as Sikkimpati (Lord of Sikkim). It is possible that they had in mind the Nepalese practice, initiated by Raja Prithvi Narayan Shah and continued by his successors. Later they started using the title Maharaja as for the other rulers of princely States in India.

succeeded in establishing their rule. Arideva (c. 1207-16) was the first of them to ascend the throne of Nepal. The Mallas were shaken by Raja Harisimhaddeva of the illustrious Karnata dynasty of Simraun (Mithila), who was easily the greatest of the line founded by Nanyadeva in the beginning of the twelfth century in the East Tarai. Harisimhaddeva invaded Nepal in 1324. Hardly had the kingdom recovered from this invasion when in 1346 it was overrun by Sultan Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah of Bengal (1342-57). The Muslims plundered, looted, and ransacked the towns and temples of the Bagmati Valley.

The period of trouble and lawlessness in the wake of the Muslim raid of the 1340s enabled Raja Jayasthitimalla (1380-1422) of Bhatgaon to establish his superiority over all the chiefs of the Bagmati Valley. His position became stronger after the death of Raja Arjunamalla (1361-82), another influential chief of the Bagmati Valley. The Nepalese historical tradition remembers Jayasthitimalla as a patron of literature and as the initiator of many social and economic reforms. Yakshamalla (1428-82), grandson of Jayasthitimalla, conquered all territories around the Bagmati Valley, including Mithila in the south and Gorkha in the west. His reign is a landmark in the history of the Bagmati Valley. After his death the Bagmati Valley was divided into four principalities. Bhatgaon was taken over by his eldest son, Rayamalla; Banepa by the second son, Ranamalla; Kathmandu by the third son, Ratnamalla; and Patan by the daughter. Later, Banepa was absorbed into Bhatgaon. Kathmandu came under the rule of two separate houses in the sixteenth century.

The Malla kings of the Bagmati Valley claimed that they were descended from the Mallav of Kusinagar and Pawa of ancient times. This claim, which still has its advocates in Nepal, seems to have no basis in the evidence available.

The Bagmati Valley is but a portion of what Nepal constitutes today. There were other centres of power too, and they occupied an equally important place in the history of Nepal. On the eve of the rise of the house of Gorkha, the

Feudatory) Mahasamanta Amshuvarman (593-609) went so far as to install a puppet ruler, Manadeva II. He gradually concentrated all power in himself, and in 609 openly assumed the royal title.

Amshuvarman's reign (609-36) constitutes one of the brightest periods in the history and culture of ancient Nepal. His own numerous coins and inscriptions and the account of his rule left by Yuan Chwang, the famous Chinese traveller who spent many years at Vaishali in North Bihar, speak highly of his military and administrative genius. He subdued the chieftains in the eastern and southern parts of the kingdom and commanded their loyalty. The borders of his kingdom touched the Tarai.

The nature of his relations with Tibet, which had just entered upon an empire-building phase under King Songtsen Gampo, is rather obscure. It may, however, be stated that in spite of attempts by Tibet to expand southwards, there is no evidence to suggest Amshuvarman's acceptance of any kind of subordination to Tibet.

After Amshuvarman's death, the Lichchhavis recovered control over Nepal, but they could not resist the Tibetan thrust from the north. With the growth of close relations between Nepal and Tibet, Nepal became well known to China as well. In 647-48, the combined forces of Nepal and Tibet avenged an insult offered by the chief of Tirabhukti/Tirhut (who, according to certain exaggerated Chinese accounts, had usurped Harsha's throne) to a Chinese embassy under Wang Hsien-tse to Harsha's court. There were, however, certain exceptions to the general cordiality in the relations between Nepal and Tibet. In 703-05, Tibet made an attempt to absorb certain districts bordering Nepal; Nepal frustrated it. The Tibetan ruler was killed in an encounter by the Nepalese ruler Shivadeva II (640-705), who was related by marriage to the Maukharī King as well as King Harsha of Assam.

The second phase of the Lichchhavi ascendancy in Nepal ended towards the close of the twelfth century, when a series of convulsions shook the kingdom. The Mallas

overcame the chiefs of Purang, Jumla, and Doti. His kingdom split into two after his death. Semja/Simja, near Dullu in Western Nepal, became the capital of the southern part, and Taklakhar/Taklakot in Western Tibet the capital of the northern part. Ashokachalla and Krachalla conquered the whole of Kumaun and Garhwal in the thirteenth century and held them for almost half a century. Originally worshippers of Shiva, these rulers embraced Buddhism owing to the Buddhist environment of Western Tibet. Prithvimalla (1338-58) annexed a number of territories in the east and in the south-west, established intimate contact with the plains, initiated a process of Sanskritization on the cultural level, and forged an economic unity between the countries of the north and those of the south through Jumla. Jumla had already sustained much loss of territory on account of certain Rajput princes who migrated to Western Nepal from the plains, set up their own rule in Doti, Kumaun, and Garhwal, created a power imbalance in Prithvimalla's kingdom, and eventually hastened its collapse.

It is perhaps necessary to make it clear here that the Mallas of Jumla belonged to the Khasa tribe. One Jitarimalla was the first among them to bear a name ending in malla. They were neither related to the Malla kings of the Bagmati Valley nor descended from the Mallas of ancient times.

Dravya Shah (r. 1559-70), who, according to the historical tradition of Nepal, belonged to a branch of the Rana family of Chittor, was the first to undertake to unite the principalities lying between the Gandaki and the Karnali. Coming originally from the Tarai area near Palpa, he conquered the town of Gorkha in the summer of 1559. He also established himself so well in the region that the Mughal Emperor conferred on him the title Shah. His work was further continued by Ram Shah (r. 1606-36), Prithvipati Shah (1669-1716), and Narbhupal Shah (r. 1716-42). Courageous and ambitious, Narbhupal Shah felt that he could easily conquer the principalities of the Bagmati Valley, then badly riven with internal feuds and factions. He made an attempt to take by storm the fort of Nawakot, which lies on the way

following were important Nepalese principalities between the Mechi River in the east and the Kali River in the west: (1) the Lepcha and the Limbu groups under the Raja of Sikkim; (2) the Kirat chiefs and the Raja of Vijayapur; (3) the Tarai chiefs and the Raja of Palpa; and (4) the Chaubisi (twenty-four) and Baisi (twenty-two) groups of principalities in the west. The Chaubisi rajais (twenty-four principalities) of the Sapta Gandaki basin included, among others, Lamjung, Nawakot, Palpa, and Pynthan, and the Baisi rajais (twenty-two principalities) of the Karnali basin comprised, among others, Achham, Bajhang, Doti, and Jumla. All the Baisi rajais acknowledged the supremacy of Doti (which in its turn recognized the supremacy of Kumaun) till it was conquered by the Gorkhas in 1785.

The Baisi and Chaubisi principalities date back to the early fourteenth century, but their history is obscure. The principality of Doti, the oldest among them all, was in ancient times a part of the Katyuri kingdom of Garhwal and Kumaun. On the decline of the Katyuri kingdom in the eleventh century, Doti was taken over by a scion of the Katyuri royal house, whose descendants styled themselves first as Deva and later as Shahi. They controlled the Shor, Sira, Askot, Byans, Darma, and Johar parts of Kumaun, besides the territory which lies between the Kali and the Karnali. After some time the line split into two branches. The senior branch, known as Rainka, ruled over Doti with its capital at Dandeldhura; and the junior branch, known as Bamna (Varma), ruled over the western territories.

In the twelfth century a Khasa chief from Garhwal called Nagadeva or Nagaraja conquered Jumla, the nucleus of one of the largest early mediæval kingdoms in the Himalaya extending from the Bheri River, an eastern affluent of the Karnali, and the Maryum La in Western Tibet in the north to the upper Satluj basin in the north-west. One of his inscriptions is to be found on a brass statue at Uttarkashi in Garhwal. Pushing north from Upper Garhwal, he occupied the principality of Guge, then under the rule of a collateral branch of the ruling dynasty of Ladakh. He also



who was a brother of Panchen Lama IV (Tenpai Nyima 1781-1852), he again invaded Tibet in 1791. His army not only occupied the border villages of Kyrong and Kuti but reached Shigatse, primarily to loot and plunder its rich monasteries. At this stage, China, then Tibet's suzerain, intervened. The Chinese army chased the Gorkhas right up to the northern gates of the Bagmati Valley, and compelled Bahadur Shah to accept peace on Chinese terms. The treaty, signed in Nawakot in September 1792, made China suzerain over Nepal. It also enjoined on Nepal to send every fifth year a tribute mission to China. Further, it defined the Nepalese-Tibetan boundary, which was later demarcated on the ground. It can thus be regarded as the beginning of boundary-making in the Himalaya.

Ran Bahadur Shah took over charge of his kingdom in 1794. He was a man of a peaceable nature, and did not suit the Gorkha ambition for military glory. He, therefore, abdicated the throne in 1799 in favour of his infant son, the one-and-a-half-year-old Prince Girban Juddha (1797-1816), in the face of the strong opposition of the feudal and military leaders of the country to his policy of peace. The Pandes, who became ministers after Ran Bahadur Shah's abdication and retirement to Varanasi, and the Thapas, who succeeded the Pandes in 1805, aimed at external expansion. Between 1803 and 1809, the Gorkhas occupied a part of Sikkim in the east, the long strip of the Tarai (including Gorakhpur) in the south, and Kumaun, Garhwal, and other hill States in the west. Soon, however, they came into conflict with the British. The quarrel centred on the Gorkha claim to certain parts of the Purnia, Saran, Gorakhpur, and Bareilly districts. There was also much misunderstanding over the question of the extradition of dacoits and runaway criminals. When the British attempt to eject the Gorkhas failed, they declared war in November 1814. At first, the odds were against them, but after a time they were able to make headway on the Kumaun and Western Himalaya fronts and finally forced the Gorkhas to surrender. By a treaty signed at Sugauli on 2 December 1815, Nepal renounced

to the Bagmati Valley from the west, but was foiled after a bitter battle with the garrison of the fort, which was assisted by Raja Prakash Malla of Kathmandu (r. 1735-68).

In 1742, as soon as he ascended the throne, Prithvi Narayan Shah (1722-75) imported modern weapons from Oudh in the south and set out to conquer the three principalities of the Bagmati Valley. As normal trade was disrupted and chaotic conditions prevailed for a time as a result of his invasion, the East India Company decided to act and nip his growing power in the bud. In response to an appeal by Raja Prakash Malla of Kathmandu, it sent a force in 1767 to drive Prithvi Narayan Shah out of the Valley, but in vain. Prithvi Narayan Shah carried everything before him. He took Kathmandu on 14 September 1768, and captured the rest of the Valley by November 1769. He thus became the first Gorkha sovereign of Nepal and established the present Shah dynasty, by conquest, in 1769. By 1772, he annexed the entire Sapta Kosi basin, bounded on the east by the Mechi River and thus built up a large kingdom, the Gorkha kingdom of Nepal.

After his death in January 1775, his son, Prince Pratap Singh (1751-77), ascended the throne. His brief reign of less than three years was spent in a war with the Raja of Tanhu. When he died in 1777, a minor son of his, the three and-a-half-year-old Prince Ran Bahadur (1775-1805), succeeded him. There was a tussle for the regency between his mother, Rani Rajendra Lakshmi, and his uncle, Bahadur Shah. Finally Bahadur Shah went into exile in India. When the Queen Mother died in 1785, he returned to act as regent up to 1794.

Bahadur Shah further extended the territory of the Gorkha kingdom by annexing the Chaubisi and Baisi groups in 1785-87. In 1788, he occupied the greater part of Western Sikkim. His army marched into Tibet in the same year consequent on the alleged violation of certain traditional Nepalese commercial interests by the Tibetans, and forced Tibet to accept peace on his terms in 1788. When a dispute arose over his granting asylum to the Shamarpa Lama,

agreed to negotiate. The result was a peace treaty which was signed on 24 March 1856 in Kathmandu. By this treaty the Tibetans bound themselves annually to pay Rs 10,000 to Nepal and to encourage trade between the two countries. They also gave Nepal certain extraterritorial rights in Tibet for the first time. Nepal continued to enjoy these rights until it renounced them in 1956 by the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 20 September 1956.

In the summer of 1856, Jang Bahadur obtained from King Surendra an order conferring on his family a hereditary right to the office of Prime Minister of Nepal. He continued in office till his death in February 1877, except for a brief interval (i.e. from August 1856 to April 1857) when, consequent upon his resigning, his brother Bam Bahadur held the office. Ranodip Rana, who had succeeded Jang Bahadur, was murdered in 1885, and Bir Shamsher, the assassin, became the Prime Minister. Succession to the office of Prime Minister was plagued by conspiracies and coup d'états until 1901, when Chandra Shamsher became Prime Minister. After that, succession became an orderly affair.

In Jang Bahadur, the Prime Minister and de facto ruler of Nepal, the British found a trusted friend. Nepal, unlike Bhutan and Sikkim but like some of the Native States of India such as Hyderabad and Patiala, gave valuable military aid to the British in 1857-58. Jang Bahadur personally marched with a Gurkha army of ten thousand troops to help the British in suppressing the rebellion in Oudh in 1857. The British rewarded him suitably for his services. They also restored to Nepal the Western Tarai, which it had annexed during 1800-14 but which it had been forced to cede to the East India Company by the treaty of Sugauli in 1815.

Nepal's relations with the British were always cordial. The Ranas made it their policy to maintain friendly relations with the British. They extended all help to the British at the time of the British military expedition to Tibet in 1903-04, although the Nepalese-Tibetan Treaty of 1856 had already provided that "the Gurkha Government

its claim to all the lands in dispute before 1814, including the territories which lie beyond the Kali and the Mechi. Above all, it agreed to establish diplomatic relations with the British. The British minister in Nepal gradually arrogated to himself the same rights as the residents of those Indian States which had accepted British paramountcy. An agreement in 1839 dispossessed Nepal of the power to have direct contacts with the native States in India without the consent of the British Government.

Bhim Sen Thapa, Prime Minister of Nepal since 1805, found it hard to reconcile himself to the humiliation implied in the 1815 treaty. He, therefore, started secret negotiations with other native States in India with a view to overthrowing the British. In the meantime the Queen Mother, Lalita Tripura Sundari, who had been regent since 1816, died. This was a great set-back for Bhim Sen Thapa, for it considerably weakened his position. B. H. Hodgson, the British Resident, prevailed upon King Rajendra (1816-47), who had attained majority in 1831, to dismiss Bhim Sen Thapa and take over control of the affairs of State himself. In 1837, both Bhim Sen Thapa and his nephew Matbar Singh Thapa were arrested, and the Pandes were appointed ministers in their places. Bhim Sen Thapa committed suicide in 1839. The chaos that had been witnessed since 1833 culminated in a palace massacre on the night of 15 September 1846 in which a large number of Nepalese were killed.

Jang Bahadur, a blood relation of Matbar Singh Thapa's, was the man responsible for this massacre, which is known generally as the Kot massacre (from the word Kot, which means a hall in a palace). Having eliminated all those who might challenge him, he became Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief on 16 September 1846. In 1847, he exiled both King Rajendra and Queen Rajyalakshmi Devi, and installed Prince Surendra (1830-81) on the throne. He visited England and France in 1850. In the summer of 1855, he invaded Tibet ostensibly to avenge certain insults alleged to have been inflicted repeatedly on Nepalese traders in Tibet. The fighting did not last long, for the Tibetans

agreed to negotiate. The result was a peace treaty which was signed on 24 March 1856 in Kathmandu. By this treaty the Tibetans bound themselves annually to pay Rs 10,000 to Nepal and to encourage trade between the two countries. They also gave Nepal certain extraterritorial rights in Tibet for the first time. Nepal continued to enjoy these rights until it renounced them in 1956 by the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 20 September 1956.

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future give all assistance that may be in its power to the Government of Tibet, if the troops of any other Raja invaded that country." Again, they stood by the British during the First World War and the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919). The Government of India reciprocated this friendliness in 1920 by raising the status of its Resident in Nepal and designating him "His Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Nepal," although, in common parlance, for brevity's sake, he was referred to as the British Minister. By a treaty signed on 31 December 1923, it reaffirmed the treaty of 1815, lifted the prohibition it had enforced on Nepal in 1839 from having any intercourse with the dependencies of the British Government beyond the Ganga, and settled various matters relating to trade, customs duties, etc. These steps, however, did not amount to a recognition of Nepal as a fully sovereign State. Nepal emerged as a juridically independent State with the establishment of the Nepalese legation in London in 1933. It became really independent only in the summer of 1947 when the British withdrew from India.

Except for the abolition of the practice of sati by Prime Minister Chandra Shamsler (1901-29), the establishment of the bureaus of agriculture and industry by Prime Minister Juddha Shamsler (1932-45), and the enactment of the Government of Nepal Act, 1948, by Prime Minister Padma Shamsler (1946-48), the Rana period cannot be considered a bright period in the history of Nepal. The Ranas invariably used their absolute authority only to perpetuate their own position and power in the country. In fact, the first Rana Prime Minister had aimed at achieving a sovereign position in Nepal but had failed in that end. He had, however, succeeded in achieving for himself *de facto* sovereignty over a part of Nepal and partial *de jure* sovereignty over the whole of Nepal. This position was inherited by his successors. Chandra Shamsler even obtained formal consent of King Prithvi (1875-1911) to assume in advance that all public acts of the Rana Prime Minister had "full royal approval."

Isolated from politics, the King of Nepal gradually became a virtual prisoner of his Rana Prime Minister. A group of discontented nobles, drawn chiefly from non-Rana families organized an unsuccessful revolt against Rana despotism in 1882. King Prithvi himself made a similar vain attempt in 1903. The freedom movement in India and the social-reform movements in Nepal in the first part of the twentieth century gradually turned the Nepalese public against the Rana totalitarianism. This led to the founding of socio-political organizations like the Prachaud Gorkha, the Nepal Nagarik Adhikar Samiti, and the Nepal Praja Parishad both within and outside the country in the 1920s and 1930s. These parties gave the first intimations of a popular upsurge against the Rana regime. The ruling Rana clique, which spared no effort to suppress these organizations and the individuals connected with them or behind them, even charged King Tribhuvan (1906-1955) with complicity in a plot against Prime Minister Juddha Shamsheer. Juddha Shamsheer even made an unsuccessful attempt in 1940 to dethrone King Tribhuvan and install in his place the Heir Apparent, Prince Mahendra.

In the 1940s, a stronger opposition developed against the Rana regime. Large numbers of Nepalese young men, who had received their education in India and who had either witnessed or participated in the Quit India Movement in the summer of 1942, came back to Nepal to start such organizations as the Nepali Saugh (Varanasi), the Gorkha Congress (Calcutta), and the Nepali National Congress (Patna). In March 1947, the Nepali National Congress launched a non-violent agitation at Biratnagar. Gradually this agitation spread to other parts in the Terai and ultimately to the Bagmati Valley. The objective was to press for a democratic form of Government in which the monarchy also would have a place. The Government of Nepal Act, which Prime Minister Padma Shamsheer promulgated to appease public

eminent jurists from India, Sri Prakash and R. U. Singh, it failed to satisfy the people because it sought to keep intact the supremacy of the Rana Prime Minister. The agitation in the Bagmati Valley, therefore, continued. There also emerged other political parties like the Nepal Praja Panchayat in Kathmandu and the Nepal Democratic Congress in Calcutta, the latter consisting of exiled members of the Rana family and having at its disposal all their material resources. Driven to the wall, Padma Shamsher abdicated his office in April 1948.

In April 1949, the Nepali Congress, formed by the merger of the Nepal Democratic Congress with a section of the Nepali National Congress, decided to launch an agitation for the establishment of a fully democratic Government in the country. Prime Minister Mohan Shamsher (1948-51) dubbed it an anti-national body and accused it of trying to subvert Nepal's independence with the help of India. At the same time he sought closer links with Britain and America. He obviously misunderstood India's advice that he should make an effort to keep pace with the rapidly changing world, and accused it of influencing, and interfering in, Nepalese affairs.

However, in view of the developments beyond the Himalaya in 1949-50, which seemed to threaten the integrity and independence of India and Nepal, it was recognized in both countries that there was need for perpetual goodwill between them. The Indo-Nepalese Treaty of Friendship and Alliance concluded in New Delhi on 31 July 1950 specifically provided for a machinery for co-operation and consultation in matters of common concern to them, especially the defence of the glacis of the Himalaya.

In September 1950, the Prime Minister sent up to the King for formal approval an order sentencing some persons for allegedly conspiring against his life. The King, for the first time after the rise of Jang Bahadur, refused to give his assent. Consequently more restrictions were placed on the movements of the King. On 6 November 1950, King Tribhuvan escaped to the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu



along with the Heir Apparent, Prince Mahendra. This event coincided with an armed anti-Rana revolution by the Nepali Congress in Eastern Nepal. Between November 1950 and January 1951, a large number of important areas in the east, south, and west of Nepal were aflame with revolt. The insurrectionists seized several district administrative headquarters. Mohan Shamsher announced administrative reforms, but the rebels rejected them on legal grounds. Finally, in February 1951, Mohan Shamsher abdicated his office. On 18 February King Tribhuvan, with the full support of the anti-Rana elements and the approval of the Government of India, abolished the hereditary rule of the Ranas and set up by proclamation an Interim Government.

The revolution of 1950-51, which overthrew the all-powerful Rana Prime Minister, reshuffled the power pattern of Nepal. The King issued a proclamation on 18 February 1951 in which he announced his having assumed full royal powers, which had been in complete abeyance for more than a century. He also announced that the ministers of the Interim Government could hold office during his pleasure and would be responsible to him. In April 1951, he made himself the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the army, an office which had remained with the Prime Minister for more than a century. By an Act called the Special Circumstances Power Act, promulgated on 9 September 1952, he invested all executive powers in himself. By another proclamation on 10 January 1954, he made it emphatically clear that he wielded the supreme legislative, executive, and judicial powers and that he alone could exercise supreme authority in all the spheres.

During 1951-59 Nepal suffered from instability. A series of Governments were formed one after another. However, a persistent effort was made to develop democratic institutions in the country. The Constitution proclaimed on 12 February 1959 provided for an elected parliament and a council of ministers responsible to it and made them both subordinate to the King. In the elections held in the spring of 1959 under this Constitution the Nepali Congress emerged

victorious, and it formed the first representative Government in the country on 27 March 1959. However, dissatisfied with the activities of the elected Government, King Mahendra abrogated the 1959 Constitution (on the ground that democracy had not been functioning well under this Government) on 15 December 1960 and jailed Prime Minister B. P. Koirala of the Nepali Congress and the other ministers of his 19-month old Government. He also dissolved the Parliament and suspended the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of 1959. In July 1961, he announced his plan to set up an administration based on a partyless panchayat system called "panchayat democracy" for the country. The Panchayat Constitution proclaimed on 16 December 1962 especially incorporated the principle of the King's supremacy.

The family name of the present dynasty is Shah. Beginning with the reign of Girban Juddha, the appellation *Vira Vikrama Shah Deva* (Divine King of Kings) always follows the King's personal name. The people commonly address the King by the honorific *Shri Panch* (Five Shris) and call his Government *Panch Sarkar* (Government of Five Shris). Various other honorifics also go with the King's name.

By a royal decree on 17 April 1958 King Mahendra changed the name of the Government of Nepal to His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

### UTTARAKHAND

In ancient times Uttarakhand was known by the name of *Brahmapura* and had its capital first at *Kartipur* (present *Joshinath*) and later at *Kartikeyapura* (*Bajinath* since the fifteenth century) on the left bank of the *Gomati River*.

The *Katyuri* dynasty, the first dynasty in history to rule over Uttarakhand, established itself in the fourth century A.D. with the help of the *Pratihara* kings of *Kannauj* (833-942). The *Katyaurs* reigned supreme in Uttarakhand from c. 850 to 1050, the boundaries of their dominion extending from *Doti*

in the east to Kangra in the west, and from the foothills in the south to the passes of the Great Himalaya in the north. During this period Brahmanism superseded Buddhism in every aspect of life, including art and sculpture. One of the rulers of the Katyuri dynasty attacked Tibet about the year 1000. On the decline of the Katyuri dynasty, the different members of the family set up independent principalities for themselves, and Garhwal separated from Kumaun. In a short time there sprang up a number of garhis (forts) and garhis (fortresses) throughout Garhwal and Kumaun. Doti, one of them, wielded control over the Champavat, Shor, Johar and Darma regions of Kumaun.

The Chand rulers of Champavat (953-1790) eliminated the multitude of the petty chiefs of Kumaun. Raja Gyan Chand (r. 1373-1419) was the first among them to make a name for himself. He gained control over so many neighbouring garhis and built up so much prestige that he was awarded a jagir (estate) in the Tarai by Firozeshah Tughlak, Sultan of Delhi. Raja Bharti Chand (r. 1437-59) overthrew the yoke of Doti after a prolonged conflict of twelve years. His son, Raja Ratan Chand (r. 1459-88), extended the Chand sway even to Jumla and made it a tributary principality. This tributary relationship lasted till the rise of the Gorkhas in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Raja Kirti Chand (r. 1488-1503), son of Raja Ratan Chand, annexed several other garhis and extended the limits of Champavat up to the left bank of the Suval River near Almora. His dominion included most of Kumaun except the western parts and the northern Bhotiya areas of Byans, Chaudans, and Darma. Raja Kalyan Chand (r. 1560-65) shifted the Chand capital, largely for administrative and strategic reasons, from Champavat to Almora, which he founded on the Khagmara hill in 1563. It was difficult to control the extensive Chand dominions, especially the areas on its western flank, from Champavat. He extended his territory up to the Bhotiya areas in the north and developed, for the first time, a definite policy towards Tibet on the pattern of the Katyuri chiefs, his western neighbours. Thus his reign is of great importance

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from the point of the consolidation and unification of Kumaun.

Raja Rudra Chand (r. 1566-97) visited Emperor Akbar at Lahore in 1588 to pay his respects. He presented several rare objects to the Emperor, including a musk-deer. He had hoped to present a yak, too, from the cooler Himalaya, but it died on the way owing to the heat of the plains. Raja Lakshmi Chand (r. 1597-1621) visited the Court of Emperor Jahangir in 1612. The presents offered by him included numerous pods of musk and whole skins of musk-deer with musk in them. Raja Baj Bahadur Chand (r. 1638-78) gave much valuable assistance to Shah Jahan's commander, Khalilulla Khan, in his campaign in the Dun country along the Garhwal foothills between the Ganga and the Yamuna in 1654-55. He also attempted an invasion of Western Tibet via Johar in 1670. Western Tibet, then held by Ladakh, was in a state of turmoil. Under Dalai Lama V Tibet was expanding southwards and westwards, and the stage had almost been set for a clash between Ladakh and Tibet. Baj Bahadur's wrath was stirred by the harrowing accounts given by Indian pilgrims returning from the holy Kailash of the harassment they had suffered at the hands of the Tibetans. There were also complaints from the Bhotiyas trading with Western Tibet. Baj Bahadur advanced into Western Tibet, defeated the Tibetans, and wrested the control of the passes on the border between Kumaun and Tibet. He virtually destroyed the fort of Taklakhar/Taklakot. The boundary established by him between Kumaun and Tibet is even now the boundary between India and Tibet there. He returned to Almora in 1671 after defeating the Raja of Garhwal.

After Baj Bahadur, the Chand power began to decline. By 1723 it had become so ineffectual that it could hardly offer any resistance to the invading Garhwalis. In 1743 the Rohilla army of Ali Mohammed Khan came up from the south and laid the country waste. Raja Kalyan Chand (r. 1731-48) was consequently faced with the stupendous task of restoring order in Kumaun and of resisting the

Rohillas. The Rohillas struck terror in the people by their looting and plundering and acts of vandalism. Finally, Raja Deep Chand (r. 1748-74), son of Raja Kalyan Chand, made peace with them by paying them a ransom of Rs 300,000. Dissension and intrigue in the ranks of the army and among the Chand nobles became so acute that Harshadeva Joshi, who had been Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief under Raja Kalyan Chand and who was later held captive by Raja Mohan Chand (r. 1777-79, 1786-88), established contact with Raja Lalit Shah (r. 1772-80) of Garhwal in order to strengthen his own position. He also secured the installation of Prince Pradyumna, son of Raja Lalit Shah, on the throne of Kumaun in 1779. Later, in 1790, he invited the Gorkhas from Doti to occupy Kumaun. It is interesting to note that the treaty, or *Dharnapatra* as it is called, which allowed the Gorkhas to occupy Kumaun is in Sanskrit. It is perhaps the last treaty ever to be couched in the stately periods of that ancient language.

In Garhwal, the Panwar chiefs of Chandpur unified all the small feudal garhs. Ajai Pal (1460-1519) made the Badhan pargana on the border of Kumaun and the Yamuna River the eastern and western limits of his possessions. He also transferred the capital from Chandpur first to Devalgarh in 1512, and to Srinagar in 1517. (Both Badhan and Chandpur are now in the district of Chamoli in Garhwal.) The Panwars, like the Chands of Kumaun, also frequently came into conflict with their neighbours. Raja Man Shah (r. 1571-1610) even conquered Champavat and subdued the gyalpo of Daba in Western Tibet. The Mughal Emperor conferred on him the title *Shah* in recognition of his importance. In 1625, the Garhwalis, under Rikhola Lodi, again marched on Daba to punish its inhabitants for raiding the upper parts of Garhwal. They took control of the passes on the border between Garhwal and Tibet and occupied all the territory up to the Tholing Monastery in the upper reaches of the Satluj River. Raja Fateh Shah (r. 1634-1716) proved to be the most powerful among the rulers of Garhwal. There are glowing accounts of his rule by the Jesuits of the Tsaparang

Mission (1625-50), who had made Srinagar the base of their operations on account of trouble in Tsaparang.

About 1757, in the time of Raja Pratap Shah (r. 1718-72) the Panwars (like the Chands of Kumaun) suffered an attack from the Rohillas and temporarily lost the Dun area to them. Dehra Dun remained in the possession of the Rohillas till 1770. Pradyumna Shah (r. 1787-1804), the last absolute ruler of Garhwal, held sway for a time over the entire territory of Garhwal-Kumaun bounded on the east by the Kali River and on the west by the Yamuna River.

The Gorkhas tried to wrest the Langur Garhi in Garhwal in 1791, subsequent to their annexation of Kumaun in 1790. They gave up the attempt as an all out effort had to be made to support the Gorkha army in its campaign in Tibet in 1792. In an effort to keep them off for ever, Pradyumna Shah offered to pay them a yearly tribute of Rs 25,000. For a time the Gorkhas accepted the arrangement, but they finally chose to conquer Garhwal in 1803. They took Dehra Dun in 1804, so that Pradyumna Shah fled to Saharanpur and sought British help. In 1814 the British declared war on the Gorkhas, and though they found the going tough for a time, they finally defeated them in 1815 and forced them to evacuate both Kumaun and Garhwal. The Anglo-Nepalese treaty of Sugauli, signed in 1815, fixed the Kali River as the western limit of Nepal. Lured by the prospect of trade with Tibet through the passes of Kumaun and Garhwal, the British annexed the whole of Kumaun to their dominion in India, including those parts of the Bhabar and Tarai which had been parts of Kumaun historically and the eastern half of Garhwal (i.e. the part which lies east of the Alaknanda and the Mandakini Rivers) comprising, among other areas, the Dun of Dehra Dun, and restored the remaining part of Garhwal to Raja Sudarshan Shah (r. 1815-59), who made Tehri his capital.

On 30 May 1930, the people of Rawain rose in rebellion against the regime of the Maharaja of Tehri for encroaching upon their traditional forest rights. They were even able to set up a provisional Government, the Azad Panchayat, for



some time.

The native State of Tehri acceded to the Union of India immediately after India's Independence on 15 August 1947. For some time thereafter, till it finally became a part of the State of Uttar Pradesh, it was administered by Maharaja Manavendra Shah (1920- ), who introduced popular rule.

### KINNAUR, LAHUL, AND SPITI

The Western Himalaya abounds in historical remains which bear witness to the lives and work of numerous ranas and thakurs, petty chiefs, who in ancient times exercised authority in the area either as independent rulers or as tributaries of a paramount Power like Chamba or Kulu. The rauhuns and the thakurais, domains of the ranas and the thakurs respectively, virtually dotted the whole of it. The Ranas and the Thakurs of Lahul were under the suzerainty of Ladakh in early times, but they came under Chamba and Kulu in the eleventh century. Several Thakurs of Kulu held the left bank of the Beas River, which formed Kulu's border with Spiti. The story of how this border was kept inviolate by a whole succession of Thakurs belongs more to the realm of legend than to that of history. The titles Rana and Thakur are caste names now, and the present distribution of the Ranas and Thakurs in Himachal Pradesh—especially in Simmur, Kangra, Kulu, and Chamba—is good index of the localities where their ancestors flourished in ancient times.

Bashahr, one of the oldest of the hill States in the Western Himalaya, had its capital originally at Kamru (Mone, in the Kinnauri dialect) in the Baspa Valley. The upper regions of Kinnaur, later a part of Bashahr, belonged to the imperial State system of Tibet until that system eventually broke up in the early tenth century. Subsequently these regions passed into the hands of Kyide Nyimagon (r. -930), who set up a separate kingdom in Western Tibet comprising Ladakh, Lahul, and Spiti. In the seventeenth century, Sengge Namgyal (r. 1590-1640) of Ladakh conquered them.

The ruins of a castle called Senggekhar at the Shipki La on the Indo-Tibetan border is a monument to this occupation. Upper Kinnaur remained a part of Ladakh till 1681-83, when as a result of the war between Ladakh and Tibet it again changed hands. Deleg Namgyal (r. 1675-1705) of Ladakh, who married a daughter of the Mongol-Tibetan general, Galden Tsewang, got Spiti in dowry.

A significant development in the history of Western Tibet during the seventeenth century was the rise of Raja Kehri Singh of Kamru-Bashahr, who annexed the southern principalities of Kangarala and Sari and established his supremacy over Delath, Kumharsain and Kotgarh. He was easily the most powerful chief in the Western Himalaya in his time. His exploits in Mandi, Suket, Sirmur, and Garhwal earned him the admiration of Emperor Aurangzeb, who conferred on him the title *Chhatrapati*. He sided with Tibet in its war against Ladakh in 1681-83. The importance of his role in this war is evident from a contemporary document discovered at Namgya near the Shipki Pass. Tibet rewarded him for his help by giving him all of Upper Kinnaur, which it had seized from Ladakh in the war. It also signed a commercial agreement conferring on traders from Bashahr the right of free trade and movement in Tibet.

Kehri Singh's successors were not of the same mettle. The Gorkhas of Nepal, having failed to conquer Kangra in 1803-09, invaded Bashahr along with other inner hill principalities. They met with no resistance up to Wangtu on the Satluj River, where they found that the bridge over it had been destroyed by the Kinnauras in an effort to check their advance. Meanwhile, Raja Ugra Singh (1736-1811), who had sought shelter in Kinnaur, purchased peace by offering an annual tribute of Rs 12,000 to the Gorkhas. In 1814, in the time of his son, Raja Mahendra Singh (1808-50), Kinnaur helped the British in their campaign against the Gorkhas and placed as many as 3,000 of its men in their service. In return the British granted him a *sanad* on 8 February 1816, restored to him all his ancestral territories, and put him under the supervision of the British Political Agent at

Sabathu, fifty miles west of Simla and close to the great, natural fortress of Arki, which the Gorkhas had used during 1808-14 to control the hill principalities between the Yamuna and the Satluj. Simla was then a small village. The administration of the tract between the Yamuna and the Beas was entrusted to the Agent of the Sikh and the Hill States.

Raja Mahendra Singh also agreed to pay an annual tribute of Rs 15,000 to the British and furnish begar (forced labour) for the construction of roads in his territories. In 1847, the British reduced the amount of the annual tribute to Rs 3,945 to compensate him for the loss suffered by him in consequence of the abolition of transit duties. In 1864 the Government of India acquired the forests of Bashahr on lease.

The British Government, which exercised paramountcy over Bashahr from 1815 to 1947, exercised its right to interfere in the internal administration of the country whenever it felt the need to do so. Between 1816 and 1886, the Agent for the Western Himalaya Native States (redesignated Superintendent, Simla Hill States, in 1849) repeatedly intervened in the internal feuds of Bashahr to prevent them from affecting the smooth running of the administration of the State. For instance, there was a dispute between Bashahr and Mandi over the marriage of Tika (Heir Apparent) Raghunath Singh of Bashahr to the two daughters of Raja Bajai Sen of Mandi in 1883. When matters came to a head, Tika Raghunath Singh escaped from Bashahr to Simmur. The British Agent seized Wazir Ran Bahadur Singh (of the village of Pawari situated on the left bank of the Satluj), who was a trusted adviser of Tika Raghunath Singh, and removed him to Simla, where he eventually died. The crisis was due largely to Raja Shamsheer Singh of Bashahr, who was a weak-minded person. Tika Raghunath Singh finally accepted the marriage alliance with Mandi. He also took charge of the administration about this time and had a settlement survey of Bashahr carried out in 1887-89. He established the Chini Tahsil in 1895. He built a Buddhist

monastery at Rampur and invited the Rimpoché Lama Lotsava from the great Tashilhumpo Monastery of Shigatse to consecrate it in 1897. In 1898, the Superintendent of the Simla Hill States took over the management of the Bashahr State and appointed a nominee of his own as Manager of the State. This arrangement continued till 1917, when Maharaja Padam Singh (1873-1947), took over charge. Padam Singh had been trained in administrative matters for three years under the supervision of one Alan Mitchell of the Punjab Commission, who had served as Manager of the State during 1914-17. Bashahr at last came under an administration which was certainly progressive in comparison with that of the other neighbouring hill States. Between 1939 and 1946 many administrative reforms were introduced, with the emphasis on the efficiency of the judiciary, police, education, and public health. Hindi was made the language of correspondence in the State. Prior to this, Tankar, along with Urdu, was the language of correspondence. In 1943, the Government of Bashahr State Act was also proclaimed with the aim of providing a constitution for the guidance of the State administration. The Act was revised in 1945.

Lahul and Spiti seem to have suffered perpetually at the hands of its neighbours, especially Bashahr, Kulu, and Ladakh. In order to escape plunder, they often paid them tribute. Spiti is said to have been ruled in ancient times by a series of rulers whose dynastic name was Sen. There are references to Spiti in the chronicles of Kulu relating to the time of Rudrapala (c. 600-650) of Kulu. Rajendra Sen of Spiti is said to have defeated Rudrapala in battle and made Kulu a tributary of Spiti. The Sen dynasty was thrown out by the Tibetans in the seventh century. Later, Kyide Nyimagon, king of Ladakh, gave Spiti to one of his three sons.

Lahul and Spiti were a part of Ladakh almost up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Bashahr made encroachments on Spiti, annexed all the territory up to Dankhar in 1776 and held it for two years. In 1842, with Zorawar

Singh's conquest of Ladakh, Lahul, and Spiti became a part of the Sikh possessions. A force of 4,000 Dogra-Sikh troops which entered Spiti through Kulu in 1841 plundered the monasteries there. The people of Spiti, who could put up only a feeble resistance, either fled to the uplands or sought refuge in Bashahr.

Lahul and Spiti passed into the hands of the British in 1846 after the Anglo-Sikh War of 1845. By Article XII of the Treaty of Lahore, signed on 9 March 1846 at the conclusion of that war, both the British and Sikh Governments recognized Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu as an independent ruler. The British transferred to Gulab Singh all hill territories between the Satluj and the Indus, including Kashmir and Hazara but excluding Kulu and Mandi (ceded to them by the Sikhs), in appreciation of his services in the war. In return Gulab Singh acknowledged his subordination to their Government and also paid them outright a sum of Rs (Nanakshahi, the Sikh silver rupee) 750,000. As Lahul and Spiti provided access to the wool-producing districts of Western Tibet, the British attached great importance to them. In the winter of 1846, Kulu, Lahul, and Spiti were separated from the Kangra District and placed in the charge of the Agent for the Western Himalaya Native States. In 1847, however, they were restored to the Kangra District.

The British were naturally anxious that the boundaries of their territories in this frontier region should be clearly demarcated and placed beyond the realm of doubt. They were able to fix the boundary between Lahul and Spiti on the one hand and Ladakh on the other. They sought to get the boundary between the border principalities of the Western Himalaya on the one hand and Tibet on the other demarcated on the basis of custom and usage dating back to the time of King Kyide Nyimagon of Western Tibet and confirmed by the treaty of peace between Ladakh and Tibet signed in 1684. Their efforts, however, did not bear fruit

as to where it lies. It is now a part of the Sino-Indian boundary dispute.

### LADAKH

The earliest chiefs of Ladakh belonged to the Dard and Mon tribes. These chiefs organized their colonies in the central valley of Ladakh. Later Ladakh became a part of the empires which came up in Central Asia. The rulers of Kashmir from the Kushans in the third century A.D. to the Huna chief, Mihirakula, in the sixth century regarded Ladakh as falling within the sphere of their imperial authority. In the middle of the seventh century, Songtsen Gampo of Central Tibet subjugated Ladakh.

Tibet and China became embroiled in a bitter struggle with each other in 660 over the question of the control of Kashgar, Khotan, Kucha, and Karashahr. Ultimately, in 670, China gave in and withdrew. Tibet found Ladakh useful in this struggle as a base for its operations against China. Towards the beginning of the ninth century, the Tibetan alliance with the Arabs in the west and the tribal chiefs of Taliphu on the Sino-Tibetan border in the east collapsed, and Tibet itself became vulnerable on account of internal trouble. As a result the authority of Tibet over its outlying possessions like Bhutan, Ladakh, Gilgit, and Turkistan greatly weakened.

At this time the anti-Buddhist faction led by Langdarma captured power in Tibet. Langdarma, however, did not long survive his success, for he was assassinated by Lama Lhalung Palgyi Dorji in 842. Again things became unsettled. A war of succession followed. A nephew of the senior queen of Langdarma seized the throne of Tibet, ignoring the claim of Od Sung, a legitimate son of Langdarma by his junior queen. The feud smouldered for almost a century. Ultimately, in the beginning of the tenth century, Kyide Nyimagon (r. -930), a grandson of Od Sung, fled to Western Tibet with a few hundred followers. The Gyalpo of Purang, Tashi Tsen, married his only daughter, Brobza

Khorkyong, to Kyide Nyimagon and also nominated him his successor. With Purang as his base, Kyide Nyimagon gradually conquered Guge, Ladakh, and the adjacent countries. Just before he died in 930, he divided the kingdom of Western Tibet into three parts and gave one to each of his three sons. The eldest son, Palgyigon, got Ladakh proper, bounded on the east by Rabma between Rudok and the Spanggur lake, on the north by the upper valley of the Yarkand River, and on the west by the Zoji La, as well as Rudok, together with suzerainty over his brothers, Tashigon and Detsugon, who got Guge and Purang and Zangskar, Spiti and Lahul respectively. After the death of Palgyigon, the Gyalpo of Guge and Purang became suzerain over the other regions, except during 1080-1110, when Utpala, the sixth Ladakhi ruler of the line, gained control over Purang, Kulu, and Purig (Baltistan). The Sanskrit name of this ruler reflects his intensely religious disposition. Indeed he consolidated the Buddhist cultural heritage of his kingdom and set the pattern of its economic and cultural life.

The practice of Ladakhi novices going to Tibet to achieve proficiency in the Buddhist scriptures started in the time of Ngodub (r. 1290-1320), the thirteenth king of the first dynasty of Ladakh. Earlier they used to content themselves with what they could learn in the schools attached to the monasteries founded by Lama Rinchen Sangpo in Guge and in Ladakh.

The spread of Islam in Kashmir during the period of the Muslim sultanate in North India in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries had an impact upon Ladakh also. The Muslims started penetrating beyond the Zoji La in the mid-fourteenth century. Sultan Shihabuddin (r. 1359-78) and Sultan Sikandar (1394-1416) of Kashmir invaded Baltistan. Being deeply rooted in Buddhism, Ladakh offered little scope for Muslim proselytes from Kashmir. In the reign of Lodo Chodan (1440-70), Zainul Abidin (r. 1420-70) of Kashmir invaded Ladakh to establish Kashmir's suzerainty over it and to plunder the riches of its monasteries. As a result of continuous invasions from Kashmir there occurred a change

of dynasty in Ladakh. In 1470 Bhagan Namgyal (r. 1470-1500), a cousin of Lodo Chodan, deposed and imprisoned the king and founded the second Ladakhi dynasty, which lasted till the Dogra conquest of Ladakh in 1842.

From Central Asia also Ladakh suffered several invasions in the sixteenth century. The Ladakhis repulsed one such invasion in the 1510s successfully. In doing so they managed to gain control over Guge and Purig as well. They, however, went down before Abu Bakr, the Khan of Kashmir, who landed two columns of his army—one led by himself and the other by his son Iskandar and his minister Mirza Haider—in Nubra in the Shayok Valley south of the Karakoram Pass in 1532. Mirza Haider ordered Tashi Namgyal, the ruler, to be executed on the charge of provoking a revolt in Nubra in 1535.

Mirza Haider, who stayed in Ladakh up to 1536, established relations between Ladakh and Mughal India. Deserting Abu Syed, the new Khan of Kashmir, he joined the service of Kamran, brother of Emperor Humayun (r. 1530-40, 1555-56), and enabled the Mughals to conquer Kashmir in 1540. Having thus established himself in Kashmir, he sent two expeditions to Baltistan and Ladakh across the Zoji La in 1545 and appointed Muslim governors to administer them. Whether these governors ever joined their posts is not known. Ladakh again suffered raids from Kashmir in 1553 and 1562, but it was able to beat them back without serious damage. It had a strong ruler at this time in Chewang Namgyal (c. 1533-75), who followed a policy of consolidation and expansion and turned both Baltistan and Guge into vassal States. After his death in 1575, a fratricidal war broke out in Ladakh, and many vassal chiefs revolted. Ali Mir, the chief of Baltistan, was one of them. He invaded Ladakh and compelled its ruler Jamyang Namgyal (r. 1580-90) to marry his daughter. The issue from this matrimony, Sengge Namgyal (r. 1590-1645), occupies a great place in the history of Ladakh. In the early years of his reign, he consolidated his position at home. In 1639-40, taking advantage of chaotic conditions in Baltistan and South-West Tibet, he



invaded Baltistan and Western Tibet and made them acknowledge his overlordship. In his advance against Baltistan, he was checked by the Mughal garrison at Shams Kharbu near Kargil. He then temporized by relinquishing his claim to Baltistan and agreeing to pay an annual tribute to the Mughal governor of Kashmir. In the following winter he stormed the Shams Kharbu garrison and forced it to evacuate.

On the eastern side, Sengge Namgyal faced no difficulty in reaching Sakya, west of Shigatse, in 1640. Depa Tenkyong (r. 1620-40) of Tsang, usually styled Depa Tsangpa, made peace by offering to recognize the authority of Sengge Namgyal up to the Mayum La. The people of Tsang belonged by and large to the Gelukpa, whereas the ruler of Ladakh and most of his subjects were adherents of the Nyingma Sect. This sparked off many a bitter conflict between Ladakh and Central Tibet. The Tibetans accused the Ladakhis of creating trouble in Tsang and of persecuting the adherents of the Gelukpa in Guge. These conflicts culminated in a war between Tibet and Ladakh in 1681-83.

Being situated where it was, Ladakh had to accept Mughal sovereignty. Deldan Namgyal (r. 1640-75) dispatched an embassy to Srinagar to convey his loyalty and his promise of tribute to the Mughal Emperor. In 1664, under the influence of an envoy from Kashmir, he accepted Islam and assumed the name of Aqabat Khan. He also built a mosque at Leh in 1665. (The mosque may still be seen in the heart of the town.) His successors, however, reverted to Buddhism.

Ladakh's alliance with the Mughals paid dividends at the time of the Mongol-Tibetan invasion of Ladakh in 1681. For two years Ladakh tried in vain to challenge the invaders, who laid siege even to Basgo in Western Ladakh. In 1683, a Mughal army intervened on behalf of Ladakh and compelled the Mongol-Tibetan army to raise the siege and retire beyond the ancient border between Ladakh and Tibet at Tashigang. This was followed by a treaty between Ladakh and Tibet at Timisgong in 1684. The treaty gave all Ladakhi

territory east of the Lhari stream at Demchok to Tibet. In return Ladakh received certain important trade concessions, including the monopoly of the shawl-wool trade. The treaty also provided for an exchange of courtesy missions between Leh and Lhasa. Ladakh lost all its possessions in Western Tibet except the small village of Minser between Gartok and Manasarovar.

For the assistance received from the Mughals, Deldan Namgyal committed himself to the payment of an annual tribute to the Mughal governor of Kashmir. He also granted to Kashmir the monopoly of the Chang Thang wool trade. Raja Bidhi Singh of Kulu (r. 1672-88), an ally of the Mughals, received Upper Lahul, which remained a dependency of Kulu up to 1842. Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu ceded it along with Spiti to the British Government in India in 1846. The Mughals authorized Deldan Namgyal to issue coins of the Mughal type with the legends in Arabic. Thanks to its allegiance to Kashmir, Ladakh was able to maintain its autonomous status and remain unaffected by the Chinese expansion in Tibet and Central Asia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Sikhs conquered Kashmir in 1819. As this snapped Ladakh's link with Kashmir for a time, Tsepel Mingyur Dondub Namgyal (r. 1800-34, 1840-42) of Ladakh thought it good policy to transfer his allegiance to the British Government. He made the offer of allegiance through two Englishmen, William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, who had come to his kingdom in the winter of 1820 to explore the possibilities of trade there. It was not, however, till 1834 that Gulab Singh, the Dogra chief, sent a force to take Ladakh.

In 1834, when both the British and the Sikhs were pre-occupied with Sindh, Zorawar Singh, ablest general in Gulab Singh's army, attacked Ladakh through Kishtwar and forced it to accept its subordination. In 1841, he invaded Tibet. At this time, the British were much too concerned in Afghanistan and Burma. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had died, and internal dissensions had emasculated the Sikhs. Tibet

was in a state of turmoil as a result of the tussle for power between the Regent and the Ministers. In spite of all these favourable circumstances, however, the Dogras suffered a heavy defeat near Manasarovar. Most of them were slain. Zorawar Singh was shot dead on 14 December 1841. On receiving the news of the Dogra debacle, the ruler of Ladakh declared his independence, presumably at the instigation of the Tibetans. The Dogras soon rallied. The troops of Diwan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratanu of Jammu put down the revolt and even pursued the Tibetan troops up to Dorkhung. The Dogras and the Tibetans concluded an agreement on 24 September 1842, stipulating non-interference by either of them in the affairs of the countries bordering Ladakh, reaffirming the historical boundary between Ladakh and Tibet, renewing old commercial ties, and, above all, initiating friendly relations between the two Governments. In the regular peace treaty that followed, this agreement of 1842 was ratified. It was specifically stated that "the boundaries of Ladakh and Lhasa shall be constituted as formerly, the contracting parties engaging to confine themselves within their respective boundaries...."

After the Anglo-Sikh War of 1845, the British Government confirmed Gulab Singh's title to Ladakh. The British made a serious effort to extend their commerce to Central Asia in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, and to that end prevailed upon the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to sign a commercial treaty on 2 April 1870. This treaty, which had ten Articles, specifically provided for the appointment of a British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh for the supervision of Central Asian trade as well as for the maintenance of the caravan highway from India to Central Asia across the Karakoram mountains. It also provided for a survey of the trade route from Lahul to Yarkand through the Changchenmo Valley of Eastern Ladakh. Subsequently, the Joint British Commissioner was also invested with judicial powers to decide disputes relating to Central Asian trade. The British interest in Ladakh continued till the beginning of this century. It declined with the realization

of the uneconomic nature of Central Asian trade and with the disappearance of the danger from Russia to this frontier.

Ladakh became a part of the Indian Union with the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India in 1947. In October 1950, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir announced extensive land reforms. The landlords—the monasteries and the nobility—in Ladakh were greatly shaken by the winds of change. They even hinted that if the Government did not stay this programme of land reforms, they would seek union with Tibet. The commotion generated by the land reforms, incidentally, coincided with the rise of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and its occupation of Tibet in 1951. This posed a grave danger to the security of Ladakh. It made the Ladakhi landlords change their attitude towards India.

Lha Chen (Great Lord) was the common title of the kings of the first Ladakhi dynasty (930-1470) and Chogyal Chenpo (Great Religious King) was the official title of the kings of the second Ladakhi dynasty (1470-1842).

The pattern of history in the Himalaya that emerges from this study is that of the history of a borderland, a frontier zone, which lies between two distinct parts of the Asian landmass, India and China. Every effort made to weld all the different countries of the area into one enduring political entity embracing the entire Himalaya, whether under the aegis of a local or a foreign Power, has failed so far although occasionally a few of the units did expand beyond their geographical limits or a temporary unity was forged by the conquests of a southern or a northern Power. Most of these Himalaya border countries have, during most of their history, looked to the south both for their security and for the support of their economy. They had no connexion or relation with the north of a political nature save that which arose from geographical proximity and the community of religion, language, and culture. Even countries like Bhutan and Spiti, which are predominantly Tibetan in their cultural and ethnic complexion, are no exception. The intervention of the British in their affairs from the second half of the eighteenth

century onwards constitutes a watershed in their history. Drawn more and more into the fold of India through a series of engagements and treaties with the British in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they became alienated entirely from the political influence of the north. Independent India did not perhaps fully realize the implications of an autonomous Tibet on its northern periphery. It, therefore, allowed the Himalaya to become a battleground between itself and China. Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal (and not Tibet) are today in the position of a buffer, with no guarantee of their security and integrity against China. It is not altogether difficult now to visualize the nature and pattern of the political and other developments likely to occur in this vital area in the years ahead.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

THE FRONTIER CHARACTER of the Himalaya has always conditioned the system of administration there, whether in Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal, or in the border areas of India. The British made basic changes in the administrative structure in those parts of the Himalaya which they gradually absorbed in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. They, however, did not introduce in the border districts under their jurisdiction the form of administration prevalent elsewhere in the country. They classified them as non-regulation areas beyond the framework of governance of statute law and framed separate procedures and regulations for such frontier areas as the North-East Frontier Tract of Assam and Spiti of the Punjab. The Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935 classified the frontier areas as "excluded and partially excluded areas," outside the ministerial system eventually introduced in India.

After Independence in 1947, the Constituent Assembly, which made the Constitution of India, also decided to accord special status to the North-East Frontier Tract and Spiti (Article 244 and Schedules V and VI of the Constitution). During 1949-50, the Government of India revised the old treaties with Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal in order to forestall any misunderstanding between them and itself, as well as between them and Tibet. The claims made by China from time to time to certain parts of the Himalaya

horderland on the basis of their cultural and ethnic associations with Tibet had alerted the Government of India in this regard. In the summer of 1950 China announced its intention to "liberate" Tibet. The Government of India felt so deeply concerned about what this "liberation" might mean, especially about its impact on the defence and security of the 2,500-mile Himalaya border, that on December 1950 it appointed a special committee under the chairmanship of Major-General Himatsinghi to study the matter. The Governments of Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal also reorganized their systems of administration and politics in the light of the Chinese "liberation" of Tibet in the summer of 1951.

### NEFA

The administrative reorganization of NEFA has gone through several phases since 1947. It started in 1948 with the splitting of the Sadiya Frontier Tract into the Mishmi Hills and the Abor Hills, and the Balipam Frontier Tract into the Subansiri and Se La Sub-Agencies, each under an Assistant Political Officer. Under the Administration Extension Scheme, which was initiated in 1947, the entire area was divided into six frontier divisions, namely Tuensang, Tirap, Lohit, Siang, Subansiri, and Kameng. (Each division bears the name of the most important river flowing through it.) On the formation in September 1957 of a larger Naga administrative/political unit called the Naga Hills and Tuensang Area, the Government of India transferred Tuensang from NEFA, and made it a part of the State of Nagaland. It also created a special cadre, called the Indian Frontier Administrative Service (IFAS) for the administration of this border area.

Constitutionally, the North East Frontier Area is an integral part of Assam. Owing, however, to the peculiar problems encountered in its administration, it is treated as a special area. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (the Ministry of External Affairs up to 1965) administers it through the Governor of Assam, who acts as

the agent of the President of India. The Governor has the assistance of a Secretariat in Shillong, with separate advisers for Finance, Tribal Affairs, and Legal Affairs. The Deputy Commissioner (who used to be called Political Officer up to 1965) in charge of a frontier district (which used to be called a frontier division up to 1965) is vested with the powers of a District Magistrate and is also the ultimate authority in his district to examine and implement the development schemes relating to various Departments and to co-ordinate Government activities. The administration works through, and not in rivalry with, the political institutions of the people. It encourages the growth of indigenous political institutions such as the tribal councils which, besides being local self-government bodies, dispense justice. Criminal cases, however, are outside their purview. They can be tried only by the District Magistrate and the Subdivisional Magistrate. The tribal councils work within the general framework of the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation of 1945.

The Committee for Administrative Reforms in NEFA, set up by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Daing Ering of Siang, the nominated Member of Parliament from NEFA, recommended a representative form of Government for the area through the establishment of a three-tier panchayat (council) administrative system at the anchal (zone), zila (district), and Agency levels. It also suggested that no external, non-indigenous system should be imposed, and that elections to the councils, including those to the Agency Council, should be in accordance with tribal customs. These recommendations were accepted by the Government. The panchayat system was introduced on 22 December 1966, and the Agency Council was set up on 4 December 1969. The first elections to the three-tier councils have just been held. The establishment of the Agency Council brought about a qualitative change in the evolution of the political and social organization of the people of NEFA. Associations had till then been essentially and entirely tribal. Now there is a territorial structure for the first time.



From time to time, there have been demands for the shifting of the NEFA Secretariat from Shillong to some place in NEFA itself. The Parliamentary delegation led by S. V. Krishnamurthy Rao, Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha (1962-67), which visited NEFA during 22 May-29 May 1966, also made a proposal to that effect. The Government of India, however, did not disturb the arrangement. Now the people of NEFA themselves will take a decision through the Agency Council.

### BHUTAN

Bhutan is a hereditary monarchy. The King of Bhutan is the fountain of all State power in the country. Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, the present King, established the Tsongdu (Assembly) as the kingdom's legislative body in 1953 and reorganized the administrative set-up in 1953-54. He created in particular the office of Commissioner of Southern Bhutan with headquarters at Sarbhang. The Commissioner, like the two Ponlops of Eastern and Western Bhutan, is the chief civil authority in Southern Bhutan. He is assisted by two Deputy Commissioners (who are equal in rank to the Thimpons under the Ponlops), one functioning from Chirang and the other from Samchi. The designations of Government officials in Southern Bhutan are the same as those of the neighbouring Assam and Bengal.

The present membership of the Tsongdu is 150, including all the *Gups/Maudals* (village headmen), the lowest functionaries in the administrative hierarchy, elected by villages and nominated as such by the King, eight representatives of the monasteries, twenty nominees of the Government, and a number of representatives of the people indirectly elected by the villagers. Women cannot become members of the Tsongdu. They have, however, as much a right to nominate their representatives as men. The normal term of a member of the Tsongdu is three to five years. The Tsongdu meets for a week in the spring and again in the autumn, and discusses a wide range of issues, pertaining to

both internal and external affairs, including the King's privy purse. It elects a senior monk member as its Speaker. The King, who participates in the proceedings of the Tsongdu but not as its head, can veto any of its recommendations.

King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk also established the Lodoi Chopdah (Royal Council) in May 1965 to advise him on all matters of national importance. The Lodoi Chopdah, which consists of eight members — two representatives of the monasteries, five representatives of the people, and one representative of the Government — has developed as a "Council of Elders" and is thus closely connected with the Tsongdu. All of its members are also members of the Tsongdu.

The political system has been gradually liberalized in Bhutan in recent years, even though there are no political parties in the country. At the first session of the Tsongdu in April-May 1968, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk ordered that Bhutan would thenceforth be a constitutional monarchy. At the second session of the Tsongdu in October-November 1968, he announced that he would abdicate whenever 75 per cent of the members of the Tsongdu passed a vote of no confidence in him. During its first session in 1969, the Tsongdu unanimously decided that the continuity of a monarch's rule should depend on popular approval, and that if the Tsongdu passes a vote of no confidence in the King by a two-thirds majority, the King must abdicate in favour of the next member of the present dynasty in the line of succession.

This revolutionary move on the part of the King of Bhutan may eventually mark the end of the system of absolute monarchy in Bhutan. In order to put the system of administration in step with the change that is fast coming over the country, the King appointed Bhutan's first three-member Council of Ministers from among the members of the Tsongdu on 16 May 1968. The process of democratization may not be limited to the revival or strengthening of the indigenous political institutions and the appointment of

Bhutan's first Council of Ministers, for there is an indication that the ban on political parties may also end. King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk's ultimate objective seems to be to develop Bhutan into a constitutional monarchy with the people having the final voice in the country's affairs.

### SIKKIM

Sikkim also is a hereditary monarchy. The King of Sikkim is the source of all State power in the country. Phuntsok Namgyal, the first ruler of the present dynasty in Sikkim, established the first centralized administration in the country with himself as its head and a twelve-member council of *Lonpos* (Ministers), later popularly known as *Kazis*, identical with the twelve Lepcha chiefs who represented the leading families of the Lepcha of Sikkim. About a hundred years later, Rabden Sherpa, a Tibetan who ruled over Sikkim for a time as regent, defined the functions and responsibilities of the Government and its constituent bodies. He also introduced a system of taxation for the first time.

Under the feudalistic system of administration, the *Kazis* exercised civil and criminal jurisdiction over the areas in which they were responsible for the collection of revenue. Tashi Namgyal (r. 1914-63), the father of the present Chogyal, introduced many reforms in the judicial system, and adopted the Indian Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure as well as the Indian Penal Code for Sikkim. He abolished the police functions of the courts of the *Kazis* in 1937, annulled the leases of many of them in 1940, did away with *begar* (forced labour) in 1945, set aside the revenue functions of the *Kazis* in 1948, reorganized the administrative set-up in 1949, and instituted the State Council of Sikkim in 1954 as a legislative body.

The State Council, in its present form, consists of twenty members—six nominated by the Chogyal and fourteen directly elected by the people. The six nominated members represent the monastic, class, and professional interests. Three members of the State Council are appointed to the

Executive Council of Sikkim and hold office during the pleasure of the Chogyal. The Sidlon (Prime Minister, designated Diwan from 1949 to 1963 and Principal Administrative Officer from 1963 onwards), who serves as the head of the administration in Sikkim, is *ex officio* President of the Council. The State Council legislates in theory only. It has no authority to discuss any matter relating to the Chogyal or any other members of the royal family. It cannot even debate the appointment of the Sidlon. The annual budget of the State is beyond its purview. The Chogyal does not participate in the proceedings of the Council but has complete indirect control over its deliberations.

The Sikkim Panchayat Act of 1965, enacted by the present Chogyal, Palden Thondup Namgyal (r. 1963- ), introduced what might be called a non-party system of local administration. The principal aims of the panchayat system are to bring even the remotest parts of the country under effective administration, to enable the people to participate in the work of the administration, and to facilitate rural development work. It is rather early to pronounce on the success or usefulness of this experiment in Sikkim, where the officials are usually from the landlord class.

## NEPAL

Nepal, like Bhutan and Sikkim, is a hereditary monarchy. The foundations of the present administrative and political changes in Nepal were laid at the time of the overthrow of the Rana regime in February 1951. Nepalese leaders made a persistent effort to develop democratic institutions in the country, and finally in the proclamation of the Constitution of 1959 they found the fulfilment of their dream. The first General Election under this Constitution was held in the same year, and a popular Government formed soon after. The 1959 Constitution, which provided for a bicameral legislature, a Cabinet, and a Supreme Court, vested supreme power in the King. King Mahendra proclaimed a new Constitution on 16 December 1962, and introduced the

present partyless administration called Panchayat democracy. The Gram Panchayat (Village Council) is the basic unit of this system of administration. This system, though not completely at variance with the earlier system, differs from it in certain fundamentals, especially in its stress on the decentralization of power within the framework of a three-tier panchayat system with the King and the Rashtriya Panchayat (National Parliament) at the apex.

Under this system the King is in supreme command. He rules directly with the assistance of a Council of Ministers, which often functions under his chairmanship. He appoints and dismisses Ministers, and issues ordinances at will. The Raj Sabha (State Council), nominated by the King, is an advisory body. It consists of sixty-nine members drawn from the senior officials of the Government, former party leaders, and members of leading families. It has no legislative powers. The Rashtriya Panchayat is the chief legislative body in the country. It consists of 125 members: 85 per cent of these are indirectly elected by the lower-level panchayats, by class and professional organizations, and by the graduates; and the rest are nominated by the King. It holds its meeting in camera. The King appoints his Ministers from among the members of the Rashtriya Panchayat, to which the Ministers are directly and indirectly responsible.

The most important feature of the 1962 Constitution is the reorganization of the old panchayat institution. The panchayats have been entrusted with full authority to pilot and execute development projects in their areas, thus lessening the dependence of villages and towns on the central authority.

#### UTTARAKHAND

Uttarakhand, the northernmost part of the former administrative division of Kumaun in Uttar Pradesh, was conquered by the British from the Gorkhas in the spring of 1815. Kumaun (including Garhwal), as the first mountainous possession of the East India Company and the sole channel of British

trade with Tibet, was accorded the special status of a non-regulation Province, although it was officially a part of the North-Western Provinces of the Company's dominions in India. The administration of Kumaun was entrusted to the Commissioner of Kumaun and Garhwal. Garhwal was separated from Kumaun and formed into a separate district, with Pauri as its headquarters, under an Assistant Commissioner in 1839.

Kumaun ceased to be a non-regulation Province in 1891, when it became a division of the North-Western Provinces (renamed the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in 1901 and Uttar Pradesh in 1947) governed by statute law and bureaucratic centralization. Its administration was brought in line with the administration in the rest of the Provinces. A separate court system was later introduced, so that the district officers were gradually released from judicial duties. After 1891, Kumaun was reorganized several times. Early in 1960, when the last reorganization took place, the northern border areas of the division were reconstituted into the separate administrative unit of Uttarakhand, comprising the three border districts of Pithoragarh, Chamoli, and Uttarakashi. The Commissioner of the Kumaun Division served concurrently as Commissioner of Uttarakhand. The process of reorganizing the area in line with history and tradition was completed towards the end of 1968, when the hill districts were regrouped and the Garhwal and Kumaun divisions were turned into separate units under two separate Commissioners.

The Deputy Commissioner of a border district enjoys wide powers. Besides functioning as the head of the district and co-ordinator of the work of all the Departments, he acts as the Planning Officer of his district. He has the status of a District Magistrate (Class I), and is the highest judicial authority in the district.

The present administrative set-up of Uttarakhand makes the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh responsible for its administration. In contrast to the Governor of Assam, who acts as the agent of the President of India in NEFA, and is

answerable to the Government of India, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh is answerable for his administration of Uttarakhand to the State Legislature. The Chief Secretary to the Government of Uttar Pradesh maintains liaison between the Chief Minister and the district administration. From time to time demands have been made for the formation of a separate hill State of Uttarakhand. However, the creation of a separate State of Uttarakhand is yet not in sight.

### KINNAUR, LAHUL, AND SPITI

Kinnaur is the northernmost *waziri* (area under the jurisdiction of a *wazir*, minister) of the former State of Bashahr. Till the end of the nineteenth century it was under the administration of one of the three *wazirs* of the Raja of Bashahr. The Kinnaura *wazir* enjoyed an influential place in the State. Indeed he was, for all practical purposes, the chief adviser of the Raja (or of the regent during the minority of a Raja). He held both revenue and judicial powers in the area under him and received a *jagir* (estate) from the Raja for his services to the State.

In 1947, when India attained independence, Bashahr, including Kinnaur, acceded to the Union of India. It was merged into the Mahasu District of Himachal Pradesh, which had itself been created on 15 April 1948 as a Chief Commissioner's Province (now Union Territory headed by a Lieutenant-Governor) following the integration of the Simla Hill States. On 21 April 1960, the Chini Tahsil and the fourteen villages of the Rampur Tahsil of the Mahasu District were constituted into a separate border district, called Kinnaur District. Himachal Pradesh attained full statehood on 31 July this year.

The present administrative set-up of Kinnaur is more or less on the administrative pattern of the border districts of NEFA; its Deputy Commissioner also acts as the Development Officer for his district. At the State level the Secretary for Border Areas maintains liaison between the Government of Himachal Pradesh and the district administra-

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or by the village headman. The usual punishment for offences was fine, imprisonment, or banishment, or even death in extreme cases.

The Dogras of Jammu changed the structure of administration, but did not disturb the traditional laws of Ladakh. They appointed a Wazir-i-Wazarat (Governor) to run the civil, criminal, and revenue administration.

On the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to the Union of India in 1947, Ladakh also became a part of India. India's administrative and defence needs in Ladakh necessitated the reorganization of its administration, in March 1960, on the administrative pattern of NEFA. From 1960 to 1965, a Deputy Commissioner-cum-Development Commissioner of the IAFS cadre administered Ladakh and supervised and co-ordinated the activities of the Departments of agriculture, animal husbandry, forests, health, education, and public works. The Additional Deputy Commissioner at Kargil assisted him in the administration of Kargil and Zangskar, and the Assistant Commissioner at Chushul assisted him in the development programme in this important border area. In 1965 the posts of the Deputy Commissioner and Development Commissioner were separated. The Deputy Commissioner today belongs to the IAS cadre. There is a demand that Ladakh should be separated from Jammu and Kashmir and given the status of a territory administered by the Government of India on the pattern of NEFA.

## II

The Himalaya borderland, including Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal, is one of the more undeveloped parts of the world. The British kept the area undeveloped as a matter of policy. After Independence in 1947 the Government of India found that it could no longer afford to leave large tracts on the strategic Himalaya border backward while the rest of the country marched towards economic development and progress. The Constitution of 1950, therefore, provided for

special administrative arrangements and legislative safeguards for all border districts, with wide powers for local officers. Several important regulations have been enacted to protect tribal rights in land and forest, and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission and the Tribal Advisory Board in each border State function as watchdogs to ensure the development and welfare of the scheduled areas and tribes. The Governments of Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal have also introduced development programmes, including administrative and land reforms, especially after China took control of Tibet in the spring of 1951.

### NEFA

Special attention has been paid to the speedy development of transport and communication to meet administrative and military needs of this strategic area. The co-operative movement, initiated in 1957, has also made considerable headway. Several co-operative transport societies are now operating goods-cum-passenger services in the various parts of NEFA, especially along such routes as Namsai-Chowkham and Sadiya-Roing in the Lohit District, Pasighat-Dibrugarh and Along-Sonarighat in the Siang District, North Lakhimpur-Ilapoli in the Subansiri District, and Tezpur-Bomdila-Tawang in the Kameng District. There are co-operative saw mills at Pasighat and Likhali in the Siang District, and others will soon go into operation in the Khampti and Mishmi areas of the Lohit District. The Administration provides financial and technical aid to the co-operative societies. These societies have played a great part especially in the development of road transport.

Agricultural development received practically no attention from the Government before 1947. Following independence a preliminary survey of the agricultural conditions in NEFA was undertaken for the first time. On completion of the survey in 1951, an agricultural programme was inaugurated for the development of animal husbandry, fisheries, horticulture, and irrigation. The people practice jhum, or shifting

cultivation, which leads to much wastage of land. In 1947-48, the Administration promulgated three Jhum Land Regulations giving the tribes absolute right to their lands, discouraging sale or transfer of their lands to outsiders, and prohibiting non-tribesmen from settling in tribal areas. In the early stages, it did not discourage shifting cultivation. Later however, it saw the need to persuade the people to adopt more permanent forms of cultivation. Horticulture, unknown in NEFA before 1947, has great scope in some border areas such as Anini in Lohit, Meeluka in Siang, and Tawang in Kameng. A new type of economic structure has evolved in NEFA as a result of the adoption of a comparatively permanent form of cultivation and horticulture.

In the fields of education and health also, NEFA has made tremendous progress. When the Education Department came into being in 1947, there were only two primary schools in NEFA with a total strength of fifty students. Now, many students from NEFA are pursuing higher studies in agriculture, medicine, science, and technology in various universities in the country. There is at least one higher secondary school in each district. The Jawaharlal Nehru College at Pasighat, founded in July 1964, provides facilities for pre-university education in arts, and there is a proposal to develop it in due course into a full-fledged degree college. There is also a proposal to set up a polytechnic institute. The Government of India has recently decided to establish a university for the promotion of higher education in the hill areas of the north-eastern region of the country and this is a development of the highest importance for NEFA. Scholarships are available for higher education elsewhere in the country outside NEFA, and the Administration has built a hostel at Shillong for the use of students from NEFA. A number of NEFA graduates are already serving in positions of responsibility in the administration of the territory.

Much attention has been given to such health programmes as the supply of drinking water, anti-malaria and anti-T.B. campaigns, and the establishment of hospitals, dispensaries, and mobile health units in each district. There is now one

medical officer for every 2,500 persons, a very favourable ratio indeed in comparison with what obtains in most other non-urban areas in India.

NEFA abounds in forests. The Department of Forests, established in 1948, has a forest division in each district. The timber resources of the area are being exploited to supplement its economy on a large scale. Simultaneously, a survey has been undertaken to demarcate forests and to introduce plantation-type crops such as coffee, tea, and pineapple.

NEFA has a tremendous hydraulic potential. The harnessing of rivers and streams started nearly a decade ago, when several diesel and generating sets, each with a capacity of 250 kws were installed at different places in the territory. Three micro-hydel projects—at Tezu in Lohit, Pasighat in Siang, and Bomdila in Kameng—are ready, and surveys for the Along (Siang) and Tawang (Kameng) hydel schemes have also been completed. It has been decided to include a hydro-electric project in the Kameng District in the Fourth Plan. This project is to generate 3,000 kw power, a part of which is to be made available to Assam as well. There is also a proposal to erect a fertilizer plant.

## BHUTAN

Bhutan is the most grossly neglected area in the entire Himalaya. Until 1960, not a mile of road existed in the country. In September 1958, when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Bhutan, he entered the country through Sikkim and the Chumbi Valley of Tibet.

Formerly Bhutan was disinclined to seek foreign aid for fear of being swamped by alien cultures and influences. It gave up this traditional policy of isolation on account of developments beyond the Himalaya during 1949-59 and the threat they posed to its integrity and security. It was particularly upset by the revival of old territorial claims by the People's Republic of China. Meanwhile, the Government of India sought to persuade King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk to

initiate development programmes and introduce modern means of transport and communication in Bhutan. In 1959, the Government of Bhutan started negotiating with the Planning Commission of India on the drafting of a five-year development plan for Bhutan. The expenditure estimates put the cost of the plan at Rs 105,000,000. The main aim of the first plan, which was formally inaugurated on 1 July 1961, was to increase Bhutan's revenue resources and eventually to create a self-reliant economy. The second plan is giving top priority to the development of agriculture. The target in this respect is to produce enough food not only for the internal population but also for the substantial number of labourers imported from outside to work on the development projects, especially on the construction of roads. For the present, India is providing all technical help, but the intention is to build up a cadre of Bhutanese engineers and technicians for future needs.

Bhutan's development and security are dependent upon the rapid growth of transport and the means of communication. Consequent on the Tibetan uprising of 1959, Bhutan sealed its border with Tibet, and this seriously upset Bhutan's economy. The most important problem that Bhutan had to face was the loss of its trade with Tibet. Bhutan used to export its surplus rice to Tibet. With its border with Tibet sealed, it had to find a new market. Lack of adequate means of transportation made the export of this rice to India difficult and uneconomical. Bhutan could not exploit its immense forest resources also owing to the absence of roads and other means of communication. It, therefore, gave the highest priority to its programme of road construction. It sought, above all, to create the transport facilities needed to encourage agricultural development and to convey the building materials indented for use in the implementation of developmental schemes. The completion of the 120-mile road from the Bhutanese town of Phuntsoling on the border between Bengal and Bhutan to Paro in Western Bhutan in 1962 connected the south of Bhutan with India directly for the first time. The Bhutan State Transport Department.

established in 1962, now operates services on this road as well as on the road between Paro and Thimphu. In 1966, by an agreement between Bhutan and India, the Directorate General of Border Roads, Government of India, took over the responsibility for road construction in Bhutan. Since then it has been constructing a network of roads in the country. The construction of roads has especially led to an increase in the movement of people and goods within the country. There has also been a great increase in the export of cardamom, oranges, potatoes, minerals, and timber.

Bhutan also has a series of helipads all over its territory. There are facilities for the landing of aircraft at Paro and Thimphu.

The development of postal, telephone, and wireless communications has also received attention. Prior to 1955 there was no systematic procedure for the transmission of mail to the interior of Bhutan. Mail was sent through casual travellers or by special messengers, depending on its urgency. Now, there is a regular postal system, and Bhutan is a member of the International Postal Union.

Education comes next in the Government of Bhutan's order of priority. Prior to 1961 there were only fifty-nine schools in the country, with a total strength of about 2,500 students. Now there are about a hundred and twenty primary schools, three secondary schools, and a teacher-training institute. Besides, there are two public schools. There are facilities for education in all parts of the country. For higher studies the boys go to Kalimpong in India. Those who wish to study agriculture, engineering, forestry, and medicine, including nursing and compounding, go to the various universities in India. The Government of India awards five hundred scholarships annually to the students from Bhutan. A few students are studying in other countries as well. The Government of Bhutan plans eventually to make education free and compulsory. The Simthoka School, specially established for the study of classical Bhutanese and Buddhism, is to be the nucleus of the Royal Bhutanese Academy which King Jigme Dorji plans to establish in the near future.

Bhutan is primarily an agriculture country, and its economy is agrarian. Formerly Bhutan used to be self-sufficient in food and used to export agricultural produce like chillis and rice in substantial quantities to Tibet. Today, however, only a small fraction of the total area of the country is under cultivation, and there is a shortage of food. Efforts are, therefore, being made to achieve self-sufficiency. Orchards-cum-nurseries and cardamom plantations have been set up at Bumthang, Samchi, Thimphu, and other places in the subtropical zone of the foothills and the temperate zone of the high Himalaya. There is also a plan to develop a tea industry, which would compete with the tea plantations of Assam and Bengal.

In 1952, long before any development programme was conceived King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk introduced land reforms. However as there were not many landlords in the country, their impact was limited.

Several sheep breeding and piggery farms have also been established. There are five veterinary dispensaries in all, and these include a mobile unit. A Swiss veterinary doctor made an extensive survey of the diseases among the yaks in Northern Bhutan in 1967.

The Directorate of Health, set up in 1967, is already operating four modern hospitals at Tashigang, Wangdi Phodang, Thimphu, and Paro. Its major goals are the improvement of existing hospitals and dispensaries, the establishment of new units, and the intensification of the programmes aimed at the eradication of leprosy and goitre in the country.

Bhutan has tremendous forest resources, with forests covering two-thirds of the country. A Swiss team toured the country in 1961 to explore these forest resources, and a Japanese team spent two weeks there in 1963 to study the feasibility of establishing a rayon and pulp factory. In view of the rich timber wealth of the country, the Government of Bhutan has a plan to establish a match factory in the south. Small-scale industries are already producing horse-shoes, household goods, leather goods, and woodwork.



Bhutan abounds in medicinal herbs and plants, none of which has yet been exploited commercially.

The torrential rivers and streams of Bhutan have tremendous hydro-electrical potential. On 13 September 1961 Bhutan and India signed an agreement to harness the Jaldhaka River for the generation of hydro-electric power. The project involved the construction of a 2-mile-long diversion tunnel on the border between Bengal and Bhutan. Bhutan now receives 250 kws free of cost, as well as a royalty of eight rupees per kw annually, from the Government of West Bengal for the power it supplies. Power from Jaldhaka is used in fruit preservation, timber, and other industries in the adjacent Bhutanese area. The Central Water and Power Commission of the Government of India has also completed hydro surveys of the rivers Wong Chu and Amo Chu in Western Bhutan.

The Geological Survey of India conducted a geological survey of Bhutan in 1962-63. Extensive deposits of coal, copper, dolomite, graphite, gypsum, and limestone have been discovered in the country. Mica deposits, which have been worked for long, are now yielding an annual profit of Rs 2,300,000. Bhutan proposes to set up soon a Geological Survey of its own, manned initially by experts from India.

Bhutan has a great potential for economic development. The principal resources are the forests, the rivers and streams, and the mineral deposits. These are quite substantial from the point of view of commercial and industrial exploitation.

### SIKKIM

Sikkim launched its first Seven-Year Plan in April 1954 with a total allocation of Rs 45,000,000. The Government of India undertook to bear the entire financial burden. Chogyal Tashi Namgyal of Sikkim formally inaugurated the plan on 15 March 1955. Before 1954, there was only a 48-km motorable trunk road between Gangtok and Rangpo on the

border between Bengal and Sikkim and 270 kms of other roads. This was considered inadequate from all points of view, and several jeep tracks in Southern Sikkim and about 150 kms of the Northern Sikkim Highway connecting Gangtok with Lachen in Northern Sikkim were constructed during 1954-62. The Northern Sikkim Highway facilitates the movement of forest produce, apples, and potatoes from Northern Sikkim to the markets in the lower areas of the country. Bridle paths to the Jelep Pass and the Nathu Pass, which were made "jeepable" during 1954-62, were further improved subsequently. As a result, almost all parts of Sikkim are now within easy reach of Gangtok. A nationalized State Transport Service operates on the important routes. A ropeway from Gangtok to Sherathang, south of the Nathu Pass, is also in operation, now used almost exclusively to support Indian army posts on the border.

The Government of Sikkim established the Department of Agriculture in 1955. It has also set up on an experimental basis agricultural farms at Tadong and Lachung in Northern Sikkim, two cardamom nurseries at Gangtok, a potato farm at Temi, and an apple orchard at Lachung. There is, besides, a State Dairy Farm at Gangtok.

Education has made much headway in Sikkim. Increased provision for scholarships and hostel accommodation has considerably helped in the spread of education. The Nanyal Institute of Tibetology at Gangtok is the premier institution of the country for research in the history, religion, and culture of Sikkim. Before 1959 Sikkimese lamas used to receive training in the leading Tibetan monasteries, to which the lamas who originally migrated to Sikkim and who contributed a great deal to the establishment of Sikkimese Buddhism belonged.

About two-thirds of Sikkim is covered by forests, but for want of sufficient transport facilities in the interior, these forests have remained largely unexploited. With the opening of new roads, however, the situation is fast changing.

Since 1960, the Sikkim Mining Corporation, a joint undertaking of the Governments of India and Sikkim, has

done pioneer work in the field of mineral exploitation. The Government of India bears the entire financial outlay of the Corporation in that it holds all the shares either directly or on behalf of the Government of Sikkim, the sum advanced on behalf of the Government of Sikkim being treated as a loan. Mineral surveys conducted by the Geological Survey of India show that there are appreciable quantities of coal, copper, gypsum, lead, and zinc.

Small-scale industries are also developing. The Government set up the Sikkim Industrial Corporation in 1964 to start important industries in the State. Expansion of the hydel power resources of the country will especially help in building up Sikkim's industrial base.

Sikkim has an excellent economic base. Forests and mineral deposits are quite substantial from the point of view of commercial and industrial exploitation. Actually Sikkim is far ahead of the other Himalaya border countries in the matter of economic development.

## NEPAL

During the Rana regime in Nepal there was hardly any development work in the country. The Ranas were not interested in the creation in Nepal of a modern political and social infrastructure which is so vital for the all-round economic development of a country. It was only after King Tribhuvan assumed full powers in 1951 that the Government of Nepal introduced development schemes.

In view of Nepal's terrain and topography, the first Five-Year Plan (1956-61) gave priority to the development of transport facilities, communication, irrigation, and power, as well as agriculture. The second Plan (1962-65) had as its principal objective an increase in agricultural production commensurate with the needs of the increasing population. It also sought to promote economic stability. The third Plan (1965-70) is a part of the 15-year perspective Plan (1965-80), which aims at doubling the country's national income within the plan period.

Nepal is primarily an agricultural country, and its economy is predominantly agrarian. According to the census of 1961, more than 93 per cent of the total population depends on land and agriculture. Agrarian conditions were formerly very bad, owing partly to the *birta* system of land tenure (in which the tax-free ownership of land was vested in particular individuals by way of remuneration for certain services rendered to the State). In 1951, the Government of Nepal announced its decision to abolish the *birta* system, but it could not implement it for several years for various political and social reasons. The Land and Cultivators' Records Compilation Act of 1956 sought both to strengthen revenue administration and to introduce a measure of land reform throughout the country for the first time. The Land Act of 1957 provided that any tenant who cultivated a landholding for one year was, so long as he regularly paid the rent, entitled to enjoy the land without fear of eviction, and fixed the maximum rent at 50 per cent of the gross produce of the year. In 1959, with the inauguration of a parliamentary system of government, two more land reform legislations were enacted: the Land Taxation Act and the *Birta* Abolition Act. The Land Taxation Act was intended to discourage retention of large holdings and thus encourage a sort of diffused land ownership, while the *Birta* Abolition Act made it illegal for anybody to utilize land without paying any revenue to the State. The *birta* system was abolished, and all *birta* holdings were converted into *raikar* (State) holdings on which revenue is collected directly by the Government or through intermediaries. An even more comprehensive land reform programme was launched in 1964-65. Under this programme ceilings have been placed upon the size of holdings. An attempt is also being made to develop a non-exploitative rural credit system.

The Nepalese experience in agricultural planning has thus been comparatively comprehensive, and land reforms have helped agricultural development in the country. A number of irrigation schemes, major and minor, have been taken up. The Kosi and Gandak multipurpose and mutual bene-

fit projects, financed and built by India, will irrigate large areas in the Nepal Tarai and will also provide Nepal with power. The Kosi project alone has cost Rs 1,000 million, including the expense on the laying of the main line from the project area to Biratnagar. Several other irrigation projects have been designed, again with Indian aid, to increase overall agricultural production in Nepal. The Rapti Valley multipurpose scheme has already reclaimed several thousand acres, and landless families from the hills have been settled on the land thus reclaimed.

As elsewhere in the Himalaya, transport is of the utmost importance for the development of the country. Before the beginning of the first Five-Year Plan in 1956, there were only 325 miles of roads in Nepal, about half of which were fair-weather roads. In 1956, India built the 75-mile, all-weather Tribhuvan Rajpath, which connects Kathmandu with India. In 1966, People's Republic of China built a 65-mile road connecting Kathmandu with Kodari on the Tibetan border. This is the only major aid project that People's China has completed in Nepal as yet. The Nepalese hope that in time the Kodari border road will replace the old trade route between Kalimpong and the Chumbi Valley.

India constructed an airstrip in Kathmandu in 1951. India also constructed the first airstrips at Biratnagar, Janakpur, Simra, and Bhairwa in the Nepal Tarai, and there is a network of airstrips in the hill areas as well. Thus, air transport is playing an increasingly significant role in the consolidation and development of Nepal.

The Kathmandu-Raxaul trunk line, which is being laid by Indian telegraph communication engineers, will not only bring much revenue to Nepal but also improve its communication with India and indeed the rest of the world.

Nepal abounds in mineral resources such as coal, cobalt, copper, iron, lead, and mica. The United Nations, India, Switzerland, and the United States have helped Nepal conduct geological surveys. Despite the efforts made since 1956, however, Nepal is still backward industrially. This is

due primarily to such factors as the shortage of capital, technicians, and engineers, and to inadequate power and transport facilities. An Indian-aided textile mill, with a capacity of 20 million yards of cloth annually, is the first major industrial enterprise to come up in the country. The Nepal Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC), founded in 1959 and assisted by USAID, started functioning in Kathmandu in 1960. Besides setting up industrial estates at Balaju and Patan in the Kathmandu Valley, it assists in the development of private industries by means of loans and the underwriting of share capital and through its training and productivity programmes.

China has helped in the setting up of a leather factory. There are a cigarette and a sugar factory set up with Soviet aid. Besides, there are several consumer goods industries in the private sector.

Nepal is a developing country. It has a great economic potential. It abounds in natural resources like forests, mineral deposits, and rivers waiting to be exploited. Foreign aid, including UN aid, has contributed much to Nepal's infrastructure and economic development. India's part in it has especially been significant. The present controversy (over the ban which the Government of India imposed, in May 1969, on the import of Nepalese stainless-steel goods and synthetic fabrics into India exceeding the quota fixed for them in the November 1968 bilateral agreement) is not insoluble. Export of these goods by Nepal to India can have little effect on the economy of a country like India. Therefore, there is need for generosity on the part of India and for understanding on the part of Nepal.

### UTTARAKHAND

During the British period, Kumaon was one of the most developed areas in the Himalaya. After Independence, however, the Government of Uttar Pradesh tended to ignore the hill districts on the border, now reconstituted as Uttarakhand. The Sino-Indian War of 1962, however, fully

brought out the importance of these districts. The UP Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act of 1950, for instance, was not implemented in Uttarakhand, except in the Kashipur Tahsil of Naini Tal and the erstwhile native State of Garhwal. Except for the Rajwar of Askot, no large zamindaris existed in the Kumaun Division, although the tenancy rules there were as defective as those elsewhere in Uttar Pradesh. Under the Kumaun Agricultural Land (Mix Provision) Act of 1954 and the Kumaun and Uttarakhand Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act of 1960, the rights, titles, and interests of the *hussedars* (partners) with respect to cultivators were terminated and vested instead in the State. This invested every tenant with right and title to the land he cultivated by removing all intermediaries between him and the State. The 1960 Act was not initially enforced in all of Kumaun and Uttarakhand, but now it has been extended to all areas.

Owing to defence requirements stress is being placed on the development of transportation and communication in Uttarakhand. Agriculture, horticulture, industry, and education also are developing rapidly. Uttarakhand abounds in medicinal and other herbs, which, if properly developed, can be exploited commercially. The Government has already set up several herb farms in the Pithoragarh and Uttarakashi districts. The wool industry, which was once of considerable importance in Uttarakhand, suffered a set-back after the stoppage of trade with Tibet in 1962. However, efforts have been made to rehabilitate it through developing sheep-breeding farms in the area itself. Under the Indo-Tibetan border areas wool scheme, several sheep-breeding farms, training-cum-production centres, and hand spinning mills have been set up in the three border districts.

The University, which the Government of Uttar Pradesh is going to set up in Uttarakhand in the near future, will assume responsibility for all research, especially for research which relates to agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, and horticulture in this border area. The UP Agriculture University at Pantnagar, which conducted the first compre-

hensive socio-economic survey of this border area for the Planning Commission of the Government of India in 1963-65, has borne this responsibility so far.

The hill and border areas of Uttarakhand have made definite progress since 1947. However, this progress can hardly be described as satisfactory in relation to the needs of the people and the strategic importance of the area for our country. A separate development board for the eight hill districts of Naini Tal, Almora, Pithoragarh, Pauri, Chamoli, Dehra Dun, Tehri, and Uttarakashi was set up in 1967 under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

### KINNAUR, LAHUL, AND SPITI

The Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act of 1953, a comprehensive piece of land reform legislation, came into force in 1955. The Act of 1953 abolished intermediaries, and gave tenants security of tenure and relief from unlawful eviction as well as the right to acquire proprietary interests in the land held by them under the tenancy. However, there was no appreciable progress in the implementation of the 1953 Act during 1955-62. With the appointment of a Land Reforms Commissioner in 1962, the pace has somewhat quickened. Different tenancy laws are in vogue in Lahul and Spiti, like the other two Punjab districts of Kangra and Kulu, which were merged in Himachal Pradesh in 1966. The Government is now trying to evolve a uniform body of tenancy laws for the entire State of Himachal Pradesh.

Kinnaur was the main source of revenue for the former native State of Bashahr, but little attention was paid to its development needs up to 1947. The only important public work undertaken by the Bashahr State Government with the collaboration of the British Government was the Hindustan-Tibet Road, which passed through Kinnaur to Western Tibet over the Shipki Pass. Since Independence, Kinnaur has progressed tremendously in the fields of transport and communication, horticulture, agriculture, animal husbandry,



forestry, and education. National Highway No. 22, which is how the Hindustan-Tibet Road is now known, is of great strategic importance. It is also expected to give a further impetus to the production of fruit and potatoes and to the chilgoza trade of Kinnaur.

The district of Lahul and Spiti is probably the most backward area in the entire Western Himalaya. However, since 1954, when the need to develop this area was first recognized, several schemes pertaining to roads and communication, agriculture, animal husbandry, afforestation, education, and health have been completed. Kuth cultivation, which brought about a transformation of the economic and social structure of Lahul in the 1930s, is now slowly disappearing. It was taken up as a regular crop in Lahul, and its roots were exported to China. The cultivation of this three-year crop brought prosperity to the cultivators of Lahul. The closing of the border with Tibet in 1959, however, terminated the trade. Efforts are now being made to introduce alternative cash crops, but in view of its height and severe climate Lahul is unsuitable for horticulture. The Subdivision of Lahul is much ahead of the Subdivision of Spiti. Anyway the entire district is deficient in food grains.

The Government of Himachal Pradesh has a plan to set up a corporation exclusively to look after all work relating to timber extraction and sales in the State.

The Government of Himachal Pradesh set up the Board of School Education in August 1969. This Board conducted its first Matriculation and Higher Secondary examinations in March 1970. The University, which the Government of Himachal Pradesh has set up at Simla in July this year, will assume responsibility for all research relating to animal husbandry, forestry, agriculture, and horticulture, especially the last two, in Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti. The Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana has borne this responsibility so far, especially in regard to Kangra, Kulu, Lahul, and Spiti. The Government of Himachal Pradesh will also set up in the northern border areas a school for the higher education of young lamas. Formerly, i.e. before 1959, the

lamas used to go to Tibet for this purpose.

### LADAKH

Roads, communication, irrigation, and afforestation figure in a big way in the development of Ladakh. The completion of the 235-mile Srinagar-Leh Road in this strategic border area in 1960 is a landmark in the extension of communication and transport facilities. In addition to the programme of the Border Roads Organization for the construction of strategic roads, the Public Works Department has woven a network of "jaccable" roads and mule tracks throughout Ladakh. The road connecting Leh with the Nubra Valley passes over the 17,730-foot-high Khardong Pass, the first of the high passes on the historic caravan trail to Central Asia.

As the layers of the soil are not more than a few inches thick throughout Ladakh and rainfall is very sparse, there can be no cultivation without extensive irrigation. The construction of irrigation channels is not easy under the conditions obtaining there. Strenuous efforts are, however, being made to irrigate all arable lands.

Afforestation is another acutely felt need in Ladakh, and the *vanamahotsava* (tree-planting festival) programme is observed on an extensive scale. The Government is encouraging local bodies and individuals to plant as many trees as possible. It provides both subsidies and free plants.

Ladakh is deficient in food grains. As the scope for increasing food-grain production is very limited, the Government is making an all-out effort to promote the cultivation of vegetables with the help of several multiplication-cum-demonstration farms. It is also distributing potato and vegetable seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. All the vegetables needed for the army stationed in the area are now being grown locally.

Animal husbandry is also receiving considerable attention. A cattle-breeding and research farm has been set up at Murtse, and there are veterinary hospitals at Leh and Kargil.

and a veterinary dispensary at Chushul.

The production of wool is of basic importance to the economy of Ladakh. Weaving centres have been set up at Leh and Kargil with a view to imparting training in modern techniques of spinning, weaving, carpet-manufacturing, namda-making, dyeing, and milling.

Education has a special role in the development and defence of Ladakh. In 1953 there were fifty-three schools, of which only two were high schools; now there are more than two hundred schools, including five high schools and a teachers' institute. Scholarships are available for Ladakhi students to study in the institutions of higher education elsewhere in the country. In addition, there are many indigenous-type schools, usually associated with Buddhist monasteries. In 1956 the Government set up the School of Buddhist Philosophy at Spitok on the river Indus south of Leh for the education of young lamas. From the time of Ngodub, the thirteenth king of the first dynasty of Ladakh (c. thirteenth century A.D.), young Ladakhi lamas, like those of NEFA, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Kinnaur, Lahul, and Spiti, used to visit Tibet to achieve proficiency in Buddhist scriptures, but this practice has now been halted by the course of events in Tibet. There is, therefore, a proposal to expand the School of Buddhist Philosophy and make it a centre of the highest learning in Buddhist studies.

Ladakh has been provided with modern medical facilities, including a 20-bed hospital at Leh and a 4 bed hospital at Kargil equipped with dental, surgical, and X-ray sections. In addition, there are allopathic dispensaries at Chushul, Padam, Kharbu, Mulbek, Saspol, and Nubra. The Government is providing financial encouragement to indigenous medical practitioners as well. Training facilities for compounders, sanitary inspectors, midwives, and nurses are also available locally.

The development programme is fast changing the face of Ladakh. The area is astir with a new life and a new hope. Neither the system of administration prevalent in the

Himalaya, especially in Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal, nor the administrative machinery can cope with the ever-growing socio-economic developmental activities there. Both are really outdated and out of tune with the spirit of the social processes now in operation there. Even the panchayat system of administration recently initiated there does not ensure that the objective of a full and prosperous life in the Himalaya will be attained.

Developmental activities have helped make up for the discrimination and neglect suffered by the area in the past. Transport and communication facilities, the backbone of all development, have improved immensely during the last twenty years. Several important roads now link even the remotest parts of the Himalaya with the rest of India. The use of modern agricultural methods, fertilizers, and improved seeds, extensive irrigation, and scientific land utilization have given a shot in the arm to the economy of the area. Health and social-welfare programmes have almost transformed the life and culture of the people. The encouragement given to local institutions, such as tribal councils and village panchayats, is leading to greater local participation in the administrative and political process in the Himalaya.

Difficult geographical conditions and, except in Nepal, a chronic shortage of labour have stood in the way of economic development in the Himalaya. The shortage of manpower is a major obstacle especially in the implementation of the development projects in Bhutan. But the people of the area are determined to put the Himalaya in line with the trend of developments in the world around.

## CHAPTER SIX

# EPILOGUE

THE HIMALAYA has always protected the social stratification of India from being disrupted by invasion from the north. What with its forbidding mountain terrain and inclement climate, it has effectively frustrated all such attempts. Whatever groups of people moved into the Himalaya from the lands of their origin in the south or in the north for social, economic, or political reasons have remained insulated one from another and developed their own cultures and economies. They have also developed their own political systems. By and large all the present administrative or political units there have their prototypes in the past.

The Himalaya served well as a sentry and protector in the past. India never suffered a major military aggression from the north, and the ravaging hordes of Central Asia stopped just at this great impregnable wall of nature. The vast expanse and dry ruggedness of Eastern Turkistan and Tibet, the first major hurdles, also deterred all those in Central Asia who might have secretly nursed an ambition to swoop down on India. In the last century, the British feared that Russia might overcome these hurdles in order to possess India. Owing to this fear of danger from Russia, they developed and maintained Tibet as a buffer between India and Central Asia. However, the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1951 and India's recognition of it in 1954 destroyed Tibet's buffer position. If there is any buffer at all today between India and the Power across its Himalaya

border, it is Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal. Also, in view of the recent advance of technology, the Himalaya is no more impenetrable from the north, although it still can halt any large-scale invasion that might be attempted. China has shown that by its armed aggression on India in 1962. Only by effecting proper socio-economic development and maintaining Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal on India's side can we make the Himalaya an effective barrier between India and China. No treaties of alliance and friendship can truly safeguard our security. It will all depend entirely on how we prosper on the economic front in the foreseeable future. In the past it was India's moral stance that enhanced its prestige in the world. The philosophy of the Buddha softened even China. In the British period it was British power that secured India's position in the Himalaya. In the years ahead, only India's economic and social advancement will secure it.

The economy of the people is based on agriculture and animal husbandry, supplemented by pasturing, fishing, and hunting to some extent, and the carrying trade up to 1962. The wealth of the people generally consists of cattle. Next to agriculture and animal husbandry it is forests and pastures that matter in the economic life of the people of the Himalaya. Before 1947, the forests in the north-east frontier of Assam, Bhutan, and Sikkim were underexploited, whereas those in Kumaun, Garhwal, and Bashahr were overexploited. Problems like rapid soil erosion in areas such as Spiti were never tackled. There existed practically no means of transport and communication. Except for the Kalimpong-Lhasa and Hindustan-Tibet roads, the only lines of communication were the dangerous but widely used tracks, and the only means of transport were mules, sheep, or yaks. Isolated from the outside world, and with their own peculiar socio-religious practices, the people languished. Illiteracy and disease reigned unchallenged.

Owing to the economy of the people of the Himalaya being of the subsistence type, the standard of living is low. The area used to be self-sufficient in the past. People even

used to export their surplus grain. It is not so now. The prevailing occupation patterns do not provide enough scope to the people to supplement their income from agriculture or pastoralism. No industry worth the name has ever existed in the Himalaya, and the few subsidiary occupations that the people follow have never engaged them totally throughout the year. They spend much of their time idly on feasts and festivities and fairs and festivals, or going on pilgrimages, or travelling for purposes of trade, i.e. to exchange or sell their surplus agricultural or forest produce and buy such pressing necessities of life as agricultural implements, salt, etc.

Much attention has been paid to the long-neglected Himalaya borderland since the gaining of independence of India. As a result of the spread of education, the people of the Himalaya are now marching forward. For the first time, benefits of modern medicine and surgery are available to the border people. Most of the remote areas are now connected with roads. The administration is encouraging the breeding of livestock as most people in the Himalaya depend directly or indirectly on animal husbandry. The livestock provide food as well as a means of transportation. The programme of scientific afforestation seeks to preserve and foster forest wealth and to ensure soil conservation. Forests are the most important of the natural resources in the Himalaya. Life in the Himalaya would really be difficult without the forest produce, especially fodder, fuel, and timber. The Himalaya borderland also abounds in mineral resources like borax, coal, copper, sulphur, precious stones, etc. It is important to exploit suitably these mineral resources of commercial value. The measures taken to improve the traditional economic pattern have already begun to bear fruit, and the people in the Himalaya, especially those in Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan, who formerly depended upon land and agriculture, have now placement opportunities in many occupations such as commerce, industry, and public service.

of the destruction of the individuality of the people and their traditional, social, economic, and political institutions. It might even adversely affect their psyche. It is equally essential that the people do not remain isolated. Initially no solution of the problem was available, but gradually a policy has evolved which attempts to avoid both extremes. The underlying principle of this policy is the development of the border people on the lines of their own genius, with no imposition from outsiders. The policy frowns especially upon overwhelming the border people with a multiplicity of development schemes. The effort is rather to work through, and not in opposition to, their own social and cultural institutions.

The Sino-Indian border conflict has greatly affected the economy of the people of the Himalaya. Even non-political relations like border pasturage and trade have stopped, upsetting the economic situation there. The practice of young lamas from the Himalaya border countries visiting Tibet to achieve proficiency in Buddhist scriptures has ceased on account of the events in Tibet. Bhutan sealed the border with Tibet in 1959, and this seriously upset Bhutan's economy. Previously Bhutan used to export its surplus rice to Tibet. The sealing of the Bhutanese-Tibetan border, therefore, made it necessary to find an alternative market for this rice. India did not renew with China the trade agreement concerning Tibet in 1962. Even Nepal and China have not renewed their agreement of 1962, which allowed their border villagers to graze their cattle in either country. But the people do not suffer for this, because, thanks to the confrontation with China, the Governments of India, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan pay special attention to the care and development of the traditionally neglected Himalaya borderland. Now there are several Government agencies which encourage handicrafts and village industries, especially by providing help for the manufacture of articles of daily need so that the people develop their own economy instead of depending on others. None the less, they fondly long for the return of normalcy, and for trade with Tibet.



The control by the military of good agricultural lands, pastures, and water sources in the border areas and the laying of roads (often through agricultural farms) created initially much resentment among the border people. This resentment has now subsided with the local people realizing that there is a price to be paid for defence and security and that it is in their interest to pay it.

This study of the geography, people, history, and administration of the southern segment of the Himalaya borderland shows how the essential elements of the present confrontation between India and China have always been present historically and how the geographical and ethnic anomalies and traditions of India and China have prevented the establishment of the Himalaya borderland, including its northern segment (the plateau of Tibet), as a buffer. Paradoxically even the network of roads being built today both on our own side of the border and on the Chinese side, being used primarily for military and strategic purposes, is more a wedge that separates the two countries than a bridge that links them together. It is a pity that Nehru paid no heed to Curzon, whose frontiers in the Himalaya he inherited, and it is to this fact that we would attribute the fall of Tibet, our Himalayan citadel, in 1951 and the debacle in the Himalaya in 1962. Things much worse may happen hereafter in Sino-Indian relations, and the trend in Indo-Nepalese relations is ominous.

This study also reveals interesting similarities in the economic, political, and social development of the Himalaya borderland. Further studies of the various problems, especially in the agricultural and socio-economic fields, can be highly useful both in the formulation and in the implementation of development programmes in the entire Himalaya borderland. These, and a hundred other matters connected with the Himalaya, have become most urgent for all those interested in the welfare of India.

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